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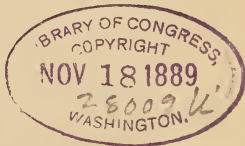
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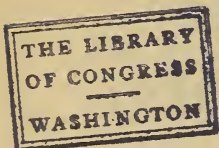
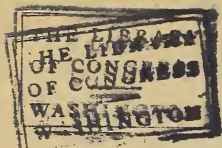
“The Methodist Armor”

Abridged and Arranged in the Form of a Cate-  
chism for the Benefit of Sunday-schools,  
Young Converts, and for Families.

By Hilary T. Hudson, D.D.,  
Of the North Carolina Conference of the Methodist Episcopal  
Church, South.



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TO THE  
Young People of Southern Methodism

THIS LITTLE VOLUME IS RESPECTFULLY  
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(3)



## PREFACE.

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It is of the highest importance that the millions of Methodist children be properly indoctrinated. Early indoctrination is the most direct means of making them loyal Methodists and moral Christians. The multitudes of wavering, feeble, and barren members of the Methodist Church are largely caused by the lack of this indoctrination and training. Thousands are brought into the Church through revivals annually; but alas! how many drop out and disappear for lack of intelligent views of Methodism and of being properly drilled. The day has come that in order to hold our youth the Church must give them special lessons on the distinctive doctrines, the distinctive economy, and the peculiar usages of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. "The Shield" meets this felt necessity.

1. The Articles of Faith are so arranged as to make it easy for children to comprehend them and learn the scriptures on which they rest.

2. The General Rules are separated and numbered, with Scripture quotations under each rule, accompanied by such notes as teach the children its practical importance.

3. The Methodistic doctrines of free grace, justification, regeneration, Christian perfection, falling from grace, baptism, etc., are all clearly and simply set forth.

4. The government of the Church, in all of its Conferences and by its officers, is made plain to the minds of children.

“The Shield” retains all the purely-distinctive features of Methodism found in “The Armor,” with a considerable amount of new matter.



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# THE SHIELD OF THE YOUNG METHODIST.

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## CHAPTER I.

### Methodist History.

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#### LESSON I.

##### ORIGIN AND PROGRESS OF METHODISM.

*Question.* When and where did Methodism begin its course?

*Answer.* The history of Methodism began in the year 1729. It was born in the University of Oxford, England. While at college, John Wesley, Charles Wesley, George Whitefield, and a few others banded themselves together for the purpose of intellectual and spiritual improvement. So systematic were these young men in their habits of religious duty that the gayer students in derision called them "Methodists." So the disciples of Christ were first called "Christians" at Antioch by a deriding world, yet the name was so appropriate that they gloried in it. And since Methodism has wrought out such

a glorious history none of her followers are ashamed of her name.

*Ques.* When was the first Methodist Society organized?

*Ans.* In 1739, by Mr. Wesley, in the city of London. It began with about ten persons, and soon swelled up to hundreds. A great revival soon began to spread over the British realm. It was a work of great depth and duration. "It came sweeping along like the winds which God had let loose from his fists, swaying devout souls, breaking down stubborn sinners, overturning hopes built on false foundations, but quenching not the smoking flax nor breaking the bruised reed. It was Heaven's bountiful gift to the silent prayer of the world's sorrow by reason of its great sin."

NOTE.

This great revival was sorely needed just at this time. The English people, under the sleepy ritualism of the Established Church, "had lapsed into heathenism, or a state hardly to be distinguished from it." In the midst of this spiritual darkness God raised up a bishop, a preacher, a poet—three men the equals of whom have probably never been seen in the world at once since the apostolic days.

The bishop was John Wesley, the preacher was George Whitefield, the poet was Charles Wesley. To these three men, and those whom they gathered to their standard, did the Lord commit the precious work of awaking the British kingdom to a sense of God and duty, and by them he wrought a reformation which stands alone as a spiritual revival without admixture of state-craft or patronage of Parliament or King.

#### THE FOUNDER.

*Ques.* Who was the founder of the Methodist Church?

*Ans.* Rev. John Wesley, who was born in England June 14, 1703.

Give a sketch of his character.

John Wesley came of good stock. His father was a preacher before him. He entered college at the age of seventeen, and came out a distinguished graduate of one of the most famous universities of the world. His intellectual training was of the highest order. *A happy and thorough conversion* marked his religious experience. He says: "*I felt my heart strangely warmed.* I felt I did trust in Christ alone for salvation. An assurance was given me that he had taken away my sins, even

mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death." Before, he knew what religion was theologically; now, he knows what it is *experimentally*. From this time on he is a new man, full of power and the Holy Ghost. His intellectual faculties kindled up into a luminous condition, and his spiritual vision was clear and comprehensive. The enthusiasm growing out of his experience went with him and caught material everywhere for new flame and fervor. The torch of Mr. Wesley's experience kindled a blaze which has glowed and spread from that day till now. The celestial fire which warmed his heart is the light of the world.

Methodism began with experimental religion in the heart, and by spontaneous energies from within projected itself out into organic forms of life—such as class-meetings, love-feasts, Conferences, the itinerancy, and Church polity. This is the philosophy of the Methodist economy. It is the power of divine life clothing itself with such organic functions as are necessary to perpetuate and spread itself through the world. In ten years the outlines of the coming Church were already prepared. Societies were formed, quarterly meetings

held, Annual Conferences assembled, and preachers exchanged, and Methodism began her glorious career.

*Ques.* When did he die?

*Ans.* John Wesley died in 1791, exclaiming: "*The best of all is—God is with us.*"

As beautiful as the summer sunset in a cloudless sky was the death of Mr. Wesley. The sun of his long life, beautiful in the morning of youth, radiant at the noon of manhood, after shining almost a century to enlighten and make fruitful the earth, went down in full-orbed glory, gilding the world left behind with the reflected splendor of its departing rays.

*Ques.* What are the opinions of writers about the greatness of Mr. Wesley?

*Ans.* "I consider him as the most influential mind of the last century—the man who will have produced the greatest results centuries hence," said Southey. "No man has risen in the Methodist Society equal to their founder, John Wesley," said Dean Stanley. "A greater poet may arise than Homer or Milton, a greater theologian than Calvin, a greater philosopher than Bacon, a greater dramatist than any of ancient or modern fame, *a greater revivalist of the Churches than John Wesley—never!*" said

Dr. Dobbins, of the Church of England. "As Mount Everest lifts its tall head not only above every other peak of the Himalayas, but above the tallest peak of every other mountain in the wide world, so John Wesley, as a revivalist and reformer, towers not only above the other great men of Methodism, but above the greatest in all other Churches of Christendom," said Dr. J. O. A. Clark. Though not a century and a half have elapsed since he founded the Methodist Church, yet no less than *twenty-five millions* of persons, including communicants and adherents to his systems, are his followers.

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## LESSON II.

### ORIGIN OF METHODISM IN AMERICA.

*Ques.* How did Methodism get into America?

*Ans.* The Methodism which swept through England as a spreading fire over a field of dry stubble soon crossed the Atlantic and began to glow and burn in America.

*Ques.* When and by whom was the first Methodist Society formed in this country?

*Ans.* 1766. It was organized by Philip Embury, a local preacher, in the city of New



York. Barbara Heck, a Christian woman, has the honor of being the prime mover in the work. Embury and Barbara Heck, emigrants from Ireland, were originally of German stock. Robert Strawbridge, from Ireland also, organized a Methodist Society in Maryland about the same time. These two local preachers were greatly assisted in their work by a British officer named Captain Webb. The first Methodist church was built on John Street, New York, in 1768. The Society consisted of but five members. As green forests sleep in the tiny cup of acorns, so grand possibilities slumbered in this mustard-seed of vital religion.

*Ques.* Who else pioneered Methodism in this country?

*Ans.* 1769. Richard Boardman and Joseph Pilmore, the first itinerant preachers sent out by Mr. Wesley, arrived in America. The former was stationed at John Street Church, New York, and the latter as pastor in Philadelphia.

1771. Francis Asbury and Richard Wright came. The latter soon returned to England, but Mr. Asbury remained, and became the most memorable and influential man in American Methodism.

*Ques.* When was the first Conference held?

*Ans.* 1773. The first Annual Conference was held in Philadelphia. Roll of names: Thomas Rankin, R. Boardman, J. Pilmore, Francis Asbury, R. Wright, George Shadford, Thomas Webb, John King, A. Whitworth, and Joseph Yearby. Thomas Rankin presided. The business was simple and brief. It consisted mainly in the agreement of the preachers to abide by the doctrines and discipline of Mr. Wesley. There were then but ten traveling preachers, six circuits, and one thousand one hundred and sixty members.

*Ques.* When and by whom was Methodism introduced into Virginia and North Carolina?

*Ans.* 1774. Robert Williams began to form Societies in Virginia.

1776. The first circuit was organized in North Carolina, and called the "Carolina" Circuit. Robert Williams came from England, and landed in America in 1769. To him belongs the honor of introducing Methodism into Virginia and North Carolina. He was a rousing preacher, and was instrumental in the salvation of many souls.

#### ORGANIZATION OF THE CHURCH.

*Ques.* When were the Societies gathered by

the pioneer Methodist preachers organized into a regularly-constituted Church?

*Ans.* The "Methodist Episcopal Church" was formally organized December 25, 1784, in Baltimore, by a Conference of ministers called together by Dr. Coke, an assistant of Mr. Wesley who was sent over from England for the purpose of consummating such organization.

*Ques.* What was the result of this organization?

*Ans.* The Methodists of America were no longer mere societies within the pale of the English Church, but were themselves a properly-constituted gospel Church of God. They are now "a congregation of faithful men in which the pure word of God is preached and the sacraments are duly administered according to Christ's ordinance, in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same." It is a Methodist *Episcopal* Church—not a Congregational nor a Presbyterian Church. It is a Church in which the chief officers are bishops who are elected and ordained to the work of the episcopacy. Mr. Wesley prepared a form of discipline for the use of the Methodists, which contained the Articles of

Religion, the General Rules, a Ritual for ordination, and other services of the Church. As already stated, the preachers assembled in General Conference received Dr. Coke in his office as bishop, and elected Francis Asbury to the same office, in accordance with Mr. Wesley's direction. The Conference adopted the Discipline as their ecclesiastical constitution, and thus became a regularly and fully organized Christian Church.

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### LESSON III.

#### ORGANIZATION OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, SOUTH.

*Ques.* When did the Methodist Episcopal Church separate into two distinct organizations?

*Ans.* 1844. The "Plan of Separation" between the Northern and Southern Methodists was agreed upon. The General Conference met in New York on the 1st of May. The feeling on the slavery question was quite stormy. Bishop Andrew, having become connected with slavery by marriage, was censured by a resolution requiring him to "desist from the exercise of his office so long as this impediment remains," which was passed

by a majority of one hundred and ten to sixty-eight. There being no possibility of reconciliation, the "Plan of Separation" was adopted by a large majority.

*Ques.* When was the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, organized?

*Ans.* 1845. The Convention, composed of delegates from fourteen Southern Conferences, met in Louisville, Ky., on the 1st of May. It was presided over by Bishops Soule and Andrew. The Convention proceeded to organize the "Methodist Episcopal Church, South," as an independent branch of Christ's Church. The doctrines of Arminianism, the peculiar usages, the Discipline, and the ecclesiastical polity of Methodism remain about the same in both Churches.

*Ques.* When did the first General Conference of the M. E. Church, South, meet?

*Ans.* 1846. The first General Conference of the M. E. Church, South, met in Petersburg, Va., in May. William Capers and Robert Paine were elected bishops. From this time on our General Conference has met quadrennially. The Northern Church refusing to divide the property of the Book Concern in *pro rata* proportion, a suit was commenced in the

United States Court, which was finally decided in favor of the Church, South. The court decided that the ministers of that Church had vested rights in the profits of the Book Establishment, and by this decision the Church, South, held the printing establishments of Richmond, Charleston, and Nashville. The debts due from persons residing within the limits of the Southern Conferences and two hundred and seventy thousand dollars in cash were paid to the M. E. Church, South.

*Ques.* When was the system of lay delegates adopted by our Church?

*Ans.* 1866. The General Conference adopted a system of lay delegation both in the General and Annual Conferences. The probationary period of members was abolished, and the rule on class-meetings made voluntary instead of being compulsory. The M. E. Church, South, has prosecuted its work vigorously throughout its bounds, and its statistical tables show a rapid and steady increase in all the departments of Church work.

**BISHOPS OF THE M. E. CHURCH, SOUTH.**

J. C. Keener, D.D.....	New Orleans, La
A. W. Wilson, D.D.....	Baltimore, Md
J. C. Granbery, D.D.....	St. Louis, Mo.
R. K. Hargrove, D.D.....	Nashville, Tenn.
W. W. Duncan, D.D.....	Spartanburg, S. C.
C. B. Galloway, D.D.....	Jackson, Miss.
E. R. Hendrix, D.D.....	Kansas City, Mo.
J. S. Key, D.D.....	Fort Worth, Tex.

**STATISTICS OF THE M. E. CHURCH, SOUTH, 1888.**

Traveling preachers.....	4,530
Local preachers.....	5,989
Lay members.....	1,107,456
Sunday-school teachers.....	77,515
Sunday-school scholars.....	612,519
Churches.....	10,951
Parsonages.....	2,030
Total value of churches.....	\$13,835,140
Raised for Foreign Missions.....	176,366
Raised for Domestic Missions.....	80,865
Raised for Conference claimants.....	94,088
Raised for Church Extension.....	34,632

## CHAPTER II.

### Articles of Religion.

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#### LESSON IV.

THE Church being regularly organized and officered, the Articles of Religion were adopted as her standard of faith. The Twenty-five Articles of Religion were extracted by Mr. Wesley from the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England. We give these Articles with Scripture quotations, and such notes as tend to explain the meaning and importance of them.

#### ARTICLES OF RELIGION.

Repeat Article I. in reference to Faith in the Holy Trinity:

“There is but one living and true God, everlasting, without body or parts; of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness; the maker and preserver of all things, both visible and invisible. And in unity of this Godhead, there are three persons of one substance, power, and eternity—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.”



PROOFS.—“Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord.” (Deut. vi. 4.) “One God and Father of all.” (Eph. iv. 6.) “But the Lord is the true God, he is the living God.” (Jer. x. 10.) “From everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.” (Ps. xc. 2.) “God is a Spirit.” (John iv. 24.) “The Lord God omnipotent reigneth.” (Rev. xix. 6.) “To God only wise, be glory.” (Rom. xvi. 27.) “The Lord is good to all: and his tender mercies are over all his works.” (Ps. cxlv. 9.) “There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost.” (1 John v. 7.)

*Ques.* Does the Bible attempt to prove the existence of God?

*Ans.* No. The Bible assumes the existence of God. “The Architect is simply named in the description of the building.” It is left to the reader to see the eternal cause in the stupendous effect before him. There can be no effect without an adequate cause. This is a self-evident truth. Common sense leads men to believe that the existence of a house implies a builder, the picture implies a painter, a watch implies a watch-maker. So the existence of the world, the earth, sun, moon, and stars, implies an eternal Creator. This universe could not have built itself; such a supposition is a bold contradiction, because it implies the existence of a thing possessed of creative powers before it did exist.

*Ques.* What are the natural attributes of God?

*Ans.* 1. He is *eternal*, having neither beginning nor end of years.

2. He is *omnipresent*, being in all places at the same time.

3. He is *omniscient*, knowing all things in heaven and earth.

4. He is *omnipotent*, being able to do whatever he pleases.

5. He is *immutable*, having a perfect nature that never changes.

6. He is an *absolute unity*, the essence of whose being is indivisible.

7. He is also a *trinity*, the persons of whose being are *three*—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

*Ques.* What are his moral attributes?

*Ans.* 1. God is *love*, having a fatherly affection toward the world of mankind.

2. He is *holy*, being perfectly free from all kinds of sin and impurity.

3. He is *just*, rendering to every man reward or punishment according to his deserts.

4. He is *merciful*, always inclined to pity the miserable and help them.

5. He is *truthful*, always representing things exactly as they are.

Repeat Article II. in reference to the Word, or Son of God, who was made very man.

“The Son, who is the Word of the Father, the very and eternal God, of one substance with the Father, took man’s nature in the womb of the blessed Virgin; so that two whole and perfect natures—that is to say, the Godhead and manhood—were joined together in one person, never to be divided, whereof is one Christ, very God and very man, who truly suffered, was crucified, dead, and buried, to reconcile his Father to us, and to be a sacrifice, not only for original guilt, but also for actual sins of men.”

PROOFS.—“There is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.” (1 Tim. ii. 5.) “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” (John i. 1.) “The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.” (John i. 14.) “Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same.” (Heb. ii. 14.) “The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee.” (Luke i. 35.)

*Ques.* Does the Bible teach that Christ is God?

*Ans.* Yes. Jesus Christ is God, being the Word, or Logos. "In the beginning was the Word." (John i. 1.) "For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." (Col. ii. 9.) "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist. . . . For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell." (Col. i. 16-19.)

*Ques.* If Jesus Christ created the world, what follows?

*Ans.* If Christ created the world, then it follows necessarily that he is *older* than the world. The builder of the house must be older than the house. His pre-existence is thus established. Christ is greater than the universe. The maker is necessarily grander than the thing made. He is greater in extent, greater in power. His omnipresence stretches out far beyond the outskirts of this almost immeasurable universe. His omnipotence is greater than all the forces of nature. He calmed the winds that sweep in the wild rush

of the tornado. He controls the lightning that shivers in splinters the sturdy oak. The earthquake, lifting a continent upon its gigantic shoulders, he wielded to liberate Paul and Silas from imprisonment. He is the owner of all things. Creation gives the most valid title to all things made. "For him all things were created." All temporal things are but as a scaffold used to build up the great temple of salvation among men.

*Ques.* Is Jesus Christ also man?

*Ans.* Yes. Jesus Christ is *man*, possessing all the normal characteristics of humanity.

PROOFS.—"The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, . . . full of grace and truth." (John i. 14.) "Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a Son, and shalt call his name Jesus." (Luke i. 31.)

*Ques.* Are both the divine and human natures united in Christ?

*Ans.* Yes. Jesus Christ is God-man—being the union of God and man in one person. As man, he slept in the ship; as God, he calmed the raging storm. As man, he hungered; as God, he multiplied the five loaves to feed five thousand people. As man, he wept over the grave of Lazarus; as God, he

raised him from the dead. As man, he suffered and died; as God, he raised his own body from the grave.

*Ques.* What follows from all this?

*Ans.* That Jesus Christ is both very God and very man; and therefore Christ is a great mediator between God and man, being the only one in the universe who can comply perfectly with all the required conditions of such mediation.

Repeat Article III., in reference to the Resurrection of Christ.

“Christ did truly rise again from the dead, and took again his body, with all things appertaining to the perfection of man’s nature, wherewith he ascended into heaven, and there sitteth until he return to judge all men at the last day.”

PROOFS.—“Go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead.” (Matt. xxviii. 7.) “But he, whom God raised again, saw no corruption.” (Acts xiii. 37.) “To this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living; . . . for we shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ.” (Rom. xiv. 9, 10.) “But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept.” (1 Cor. xv. 20.)

*Ques.* What are the proofs of Christ’s resurrection?

*Ans.* The proofs of Christ's resurrection are abundant. Five times he showed himself alive on the day of his resurrection: To Mary Magdalene, to another company of women, to Peter, to two disciples on their way to Emmaüs, and to the eleven. Afterward he showed himself to St. Thomas in the prayer-meeting; then in Galilee to seven, and to five hundred. They knew him by many infallible proofs. He showed them the marks on his hands and feet, even eating and drinking with his disciples, thus proving the verity of his body. The Holy Spirit confirmed their faith, for while Peter preached the risen Christ "the Holy Ghost fell on all them that heard the word."

*Ques.* What did his resurrection demonstrate?

*Ans.* It demonstrated his divinity. It established the truth of his own prediction: "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." "I lay down my life, that I may take it again. . . . I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again." The resurrection was the infallible proof of his true Messiahship. For either he arose by his own power (and if he did, then he was divine) or he was raised up by the power of the Father;

and if this be so, then God sets his seal to his work, for God would not raise from the dead an impostor.

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### LESSON V.

Repeat Article IV., in reference to the Holy Ghost.

“The Holy Ghost, proceeding from the Father and the Son, is of one substance, majesty, and glory, with the Father and the Son, very and eternal God.”

PROOFS.—“Baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” (Matt. xxviii. 19.) “When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth.” (John xvi. 13.) “The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.” (Rom. viii. 16.) “The eternal Spirit.” (Heb. ix. 14.) “Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.” (2 Pet. i. 21.)

*Ques.* What do the above Article and scriptures teach?

*Ans.* That the Holy Ghost is a divine person, distinct from the Father and the Son. He proceeds from the Father and Son, and therefore can be neither, yet he is associated with the Father and Son in the divine work of creating and preserving all things. The per-



sonal pronoun "he" is applied to one who is another Comforter. "When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, . . . he shall testify of me."

The Holy Spirit is called God. "Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost? . . . Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God?" (Acts v. 3, 4.) He is called eternal (Heb. ix. 14), omnipresent (Ps. cxxxix. 7), omniscient (1 Cor. ii. 10). To him is ascribed wisdom (Eph. i. 17), creation (Job xxxiii. 4), inspiration (1 Pet. i. 10, 11.)

*Ques.* Is the agency of the Holy Spirit taught in the Old Testament scriptures?

*Ans.* Yes. "Let us make man in our image." "And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." The Spirit of God is creative: "The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life." He is no less active in providence: "My Spirit shall not always strive with man." He is omnipresent: "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit?"

Repeat Article V., in reference to the Sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures for Salvation.

"The Holy Scriptures contain all things

necessary to salvation; so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation. In the name of the Holy Scriptures, we do understand those canonical books of the Old and New Testaments, of whose authority was never any doubt in the Church."

Repeat the canonical books.

"Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, The First Book of Samuel, The Second Book of Samuel, The First Book of Kings, The Second Book of Kings, The First Book of Chronicles, The Second Book of Chronicles, The Book of Ezra, The Book of Nehemiah, The Book of Esther, The Book of Job, The Psalms, The Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, or the Preacher, Cantica, or Songs of Solomon, Four Prophets the greater, Twelve Prophets the less. All the books of the New Testament, as they are commonly received, we do receive and account canonical."

PROOFS.—"The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple." (Ps. xix. 7.) "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." (John

v. 39.) "From a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation." (2 Tim. iii. 15.) "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." (2 Tim. iii. 16.) "And receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls." (Jas. i. 21.)

*Ques.* What does the Article teach?

*Ans.* This Article teaches that the Bible is to be appealed to in the *final settlement of all questions of faith and practice*. It is the rule of faith and practice. "The Bible is the religion of Protestants." But the Catholic Church teaches that "Scripture and tradition, and these explained by the Catholic clergy, is the rule of faith." The bulls of popes filling eight volumes, the Decretals, Acts of Councils, the Acts Sanctum, making ninety volumes, an unlimited mass of unwritten traditions which have been accumulating like drift-wood on a river from the commencement of the Christian era up to the present time—all these cumbrous, human inventions added to the Bible—constitute the Catholic rule of faith. The Council of Trent decreed that these traditions, both written and unwritten, are of equal authority with the Bi-

ble, and he that denies this shall be accursed. But Methodism, in common with all Protestants, teach that "the Holy Scriptures contain all things necessary to salvation."

*Ques.* Who oppose and who recommend the reading of the Bible?

*Ans.* The Romanists oppose the private reading of the Bible as a sin. But we hold that the truths of the Bible are addressed to all, and are comprehensible by all, and therefore the command, "Search the Scriptures," is equally binding upon all.

"The word of God is the book of the common people; it is the working-man's book; it is the child's book; it is the slave's book; it is the book of every creature that is down-trodden; it is a book that carries with it the leaven of God's soul; it is a book that tends to make men larger and better and sweeter, and that succors them all through life; and do you suppose it is going to be lost out of the world? When the Bible is lost out of the world it will be because there are no men in it who are in trouble and need succoring, no men who are oppressed and need release, no men who are in darkness and need light, no men who are hungry and need food, no men

who are sinning and need mercy, no men who are lost and need the salvation of God. Let us therefore take the word of God as our friend, and hold it to our heart, and make it the man of our counsel, our guide, the lamp to our feet, the light to our path. Use it as God meant it to be used—as the soul's food and the soul's joy—and it shall be your life's rest."

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#### *LESSON VI.*

Repeat Article VI., in reference to the Old Testament.

"The Old Testament is not contrary to the New; for both in the Old and New Testaments everlasting life is offered to mankind by Christ, who is the only Mediator between God and man, being God and man. Wherefore they are not to be heard who feign that the old fathers did look only for transitory promises. Although the law given from God by Moses, as touching ceremonies and rites, doth not bind Christians, nor ought the civil precepts thereof of necessity to be received in any commonwealth, yet, notwithstanding, no Christian whatsoever is free from the obedience of the commandments which are called moral."

PROOFS.—“Beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.” “And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me.” (Luke xxiv. 27, 44.) “Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill.” (Matt. v. 17.)

*Ques.* How do you prove the harmony of the Old and New Testaments?

*Ans.* The harmony of the Old and New Testaments is clearly seen in the fact that Christ and the apostles made frequent quotations from the former. Some writer has shown that about ninety quotations from the Old Testament are found in the teachings of Christ. To establish the resurrection against the Sadducees, Christ quotes from Exodus iii. 6; to establish the primitive institution of marriage, from Genesis i. 27; to answer the question as to the great commandment, from Deuteronomy vi. 5; to show that David's son was David's Lord, from Psalm cx. 1; to preach a sermon, from Isaiah lxi. 1. Besides these and many more, there are references in our Lord's discourses to Jonah as a type of the

resurrection; to the brazen serpent; to the living water and manna in the desert; to Abel, Noah, Abraham, Lot, Solomon, Moses, Elijah, and Daniel. When tempted by the devil, his great weapon of defense was: "It is written." It is clear that Christ studied the Old Scriptures with devoted care, and made constant use of their truths in his teachings. "The two Testaments—Old and New—like two breasts of the same person, give the same milk." The river of salvation took its rise in the mountains of Judea, and descended into the plain of the gospel, and, like the Nile, spread beauty and fertility along its deepening and widening course.

Repeat Article VII., in reference to Original or Birth Sin.

"Original Sin standeth not in the following of Adam (as the Pelagians do vainly talk), but it is the corruption of the nature of every man, that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam, whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and of his own nature inclined to evil, and that continually."

PROOFS.—"By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon

all men, for that all have sinned," (Rom. v. 12.) "By one man's disobedience many were made sinners." (Rom. v. 19.) "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." (Ps. li. 5.) "And were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." (Eph. ii. 3.)

*Ques.* What did the Pelagians teach?

*Ans.* The doctrine of the Pelagians was that children are born pure and innocent, and that they become corrupt by *outside* influences, by imitating or following evil examples, by vicious education and society.

*Ques.* What is the true view?

*Ans.* The orthodox view is that this native corruption is derived from a sinful ancestry, in whose loss of purity their whole posterity is involved. This view represents the depravity of human nature as coming from the laws of natural descent, the child inheriting from the parent a corrupt nature, prone to evil, in consequence of which he runs easily into open sin. Adam "begat a son in his own likeness." (Gen. v. 3.) "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." (Ps. li. 5.) "From within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts." (Mark vii. 21.) On these passages and others the doctrine of original sin is based.



There is nothing unreasonable in this doctrine, for it is well known that men do transmit bodily ailments and mental peculiarities to their children. Dishonest men tend to have dishonest children. Thieves tend to breed thieves; murderers, murderers; drunkards, drunkards; insane men propagate insanity.

*Ques.* What benefits do children derive from the atonement of Christ?

*Ans.* "The benefits of Christ's death are co-extensive with the sin of Adam (Rom. v. 18); hence all children dying in infancy partake of the free gift." "Infants are not indeed born justified; nor are they capable of that voluntary acceptance of the benefits of the free gift which is necessary in the case of adults; but on the other hand they cannot reject it, and it is by the rejection of it that adults perish. The process by which grace is communicated to infants is not revealed. The manner doubtless differs from that employed toward adults." (Watson.) "Children are born into the world sustaining through the atonement such a relation to the moral kingdom of God as that they are proper subjects of God's regenerating grace,

and those dying in infancy come into actual possession of all these blessings. They may now be prepared for and admitted into the kingdom by the grace of God. This is sufficiently evident from our Lord's words: 'Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of heaven.'" (Dr. Raymond.)

*Ques.* How soon may we look for the conversion of children?

*Ans.* Christ says: "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." We reverse his saying. Our reading to the children is: "Except ye become as grown men and be converted." The vine need not trail on the ground till it is ten years old, and then be trained on the trellis. The only way to insure a good peach is to cut back the stick that grows from the stone, and put on a new graft. In God's kingdom the best fruit grows from the stone. The son need not wander off from his father's home, spend his substance in riotous living, and eat the husks that the swine do feed on, in order to be acceptable to his father, and have the best robe and the ring and the fatted calf. The immeasurable

love of God gives us this infinite grace not because of our wanderings, but in spite of them. How old must a rose-bud be before it receives that life that enables it to blossom? It may be stunted and dwarfed and die; the blossom may never come. But the normal law of God is rose-bud and blossom on every bush.

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### *LESSON VII.*

Repeat Article VIII., in reference to Free Will.

“The condition of man after the fall of Adam is such, that he cannot turn and prepare himself, by his own natural strength and works, to faith, and calling upon God; wherefore we have no power to do good works, pleasant and acceptable to God, without the grace of God by Christ preventing us, that we may have a good will, and working with us, when we have that good will.”

PROOFS.—“I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing.” (John xv. 5.) “When we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.” (Rom. v. 6.) “You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins.” (Eph. ii. 1.)

*Ques.* What does "preventing" mean in the Article?

*Ans.* The term "preventing" here has the old English meaning of "going before and helping."

*Ques.* What power is necessary to convert man?

*Ans.* Man is convicted and converted by the power of the Holy Ghost, but the will of man must co-operate in the work. The Divine Spirit is like the mother's heart. It is universal and infinite. It is the mother-soul of the universe, with infinite power and sweetness and beauty and glory, shining down upon all men, good and bad, high and low, ignorant and educated, and stimulating them to be better, to be nobler, to be higher; and when any man accepts the influence of the Divine Spirit, and co-operates with it, that moment the work is done by the *stimulus* of God acting with the practical energy and will of the human soul.

*Ques.* Must man co-operate with the Spirit in working out his salvation?

*Ans.* Yes. "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling: for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his

good pleasure.” The Divine Spirit is atmospheric, and it becomes personal whenever any person appropriates it. The sunlight has in it all harvests; but we do not reap a single thing until that sunlight is appropriated by some root or some leaf or some blossom or something in the ground. The sunlight on the Sahara has neither wheat nor corn. These are only to be had in the field where seeds are planted, where the nature of the seeds works with the sunlight, and where the soil is quickened and stimulated by the heat and moisture. The divine influence works in men to will and to do by their nature, by their very law of organization; and when a man becomes converted, it is by both the divine influence and the exercise of his own energies—*i. e.*, they co-operate. It is a unitary, although a complex, work.

Repeat Article IX., in reference to the Justification of Man.

“We are accounted righteous before God, only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, by faith, and not for our own works or deservings: wherefore, that we are justified by faith only, is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort.”

PROOFS.—“By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast.” (Eph. ii. 8, 9.) “Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.” (Rom. iii. 28.) “Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Rom. v. 1.)

*Ques.* What doctrine is taught in this Article?

*Ans.* 1. The *originating* cause of justification is the free, spontaneous love of God. “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him might not perish, but have everlasting life.”

2. The *meritorious* ground of pardon is the atonement of Jesus Christ. It is *through Jesus Christ*. We are “justified by his blood,” “reconciled to God by the death of his Son.” Christ “once suffered for sins.”

3. Personal faith is the *instrumental* cause of justification. It is *through faith*. “Being justified by faith.” Saving faith excludes works as a ground of justification. It is not by the merit of faith itself, but only by faith, as that which embraces and appropriates the merit of Christ. Faith is the hand receiving the gift of salvation.

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Results: First, restoration to divine favor. "We have peace with God." Second, adoption into the family of God. "If children, then heirs; heirs of God." "Whom he justifies, them he also glorifies."

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### *LESSON VIII.*

Repeat Article X., in reference to Good Works.

"Although good works, which are the fruits of faith, and follow after justification, cannot put away our sins, and endure the severity of God's judgment; yet are they pleasing and acceptable to God in Christ, and spring out of a true and lively faith, insomuch that by them a lively faith may be as evidently known as a tree is discerned by its fruit."

PROOFS.—"By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight." (Rom. iii. 20.) "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us." (Tit. iii. v.) "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you." (John xv. 14.) "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." (Rev. xxii, 14.) "A man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my

works. . . . Faith without works is dead." (Jas. ii. 18-20. See also parable of talents, Matt. xxv. 13.)

*Ques.* What is the teaching of the Bible as to faith and good works?

*Ans.* The Bible clearly teaches that faith in Christ is the ground of salvation, but that good works are the measure of our reward. Saved by faith, but preserved by good works, is the true doctrine. Good works may be defined to be "right motives flowing out into right actions." Good works are the outward expression of good feelings. Grace in the heart is the fountain; the good works are the streams flowing from it. Love and good works are fountain and stream; and in proportion to the fullness of the lake of grace in the heart will be the greatness, beauty, and fertility of the rivers of good works flowing from it. A feeble fountain will produce a feeble stream.

*Ques.* What does this Article condemn?

*Ans.* The Article also levels its force against the Catholic doctrine of good works as having an atoning merit in them. Thus, it was taught that when men made pilgrimages, went through a course of fasting, gave donations, repeated the *Credo*, the *Ave*, the *Pater Noster*, these were set down to their credit as so much



over against wrong-doing. They falsely assumed religion to be a mere business, conducted as the transactions of a man's store, where books of debit and credit were kept.

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### *LESSON IX.*

Repeat Article XI., in reference to Works of Supererogation.

“Voluntary works, besides over and above God's commandments, which are called works of supererogation, cannot be taught without arrogancy and impiety. For by them men do declare that they do not only render unto God as much as they are bound to do, but that they do more for his sake than of bounden duty is required: whereas Christ saith plainly, When ye have done all that is commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants.”

PROOFS.—“Is it any pleasure to the Almighty, that thou art righteous? or is it gain to him, that thou makest thy ways perfect.” (Job. xxii. 3.) “So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do.” (Luke xvii. 10.)

*Ques.* What error of the Catholic Church is condemned by this Article?

*Ans.* The error of the Catholic Church against which this Article is directed teaches that “there is an immense treasure of merit composed of the pious deeds of the saints, which they have performed beyond what was necessary for their own salvation, and which were applicable to the benefit of others.” But the Bible teaches that the circle of duty takes in the entire ability of man, and therefore leaves no room for the work of supererogation. Out of the doctrine of supererogation came the wicked system of selling indulgences to commit sin, which so shocked Luther as to move him to begin and carry on the great work of the German Reformation.

Repeat Article XII., in reference to Sin after Justification.

“Not every sin willingly committed after justification is the sin against the Holy Ghost, and unpardonable. Wherefore, the grant of repentance is not to be denied to such as fall into sin after justification: after we have received the Holy Ghost, we may depart from grace given, and fall into sin, and, by the grace of God, rise again and amend our lives. And, therefore, they are to be condemned who say they can no more sin as long as they live

here, or deny the place of forgiveness to such as truly repent."

PROOFS.—"Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings." (Jer. iii. 22.) "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." (1 John ii. 1.) "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins." (1 John i. 9.) "Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works." (Rev. ii. 5.)

*Ques.* What error does this Article condemn?

*Ans.* This Article denies the dogma anciently taught by some, that every sin committed after justification is the sin against the Holy Ghost.

*Ques.* What is the sin against the Holy Ghost?

*Ans.* The sin against the Holy Ghost is ascribing the miraculous works of Christ to the agency of the devil. The scribes said: "He [Christ] hath Beelzebub, and by the prince of the devils casteth he out devils." And Christ, commenting on this charge, says: "But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness. . . . Because they said, He hath an unclean spirit." The unpardonable sin is that grade of wick-

edness and settled malignity, that hardening of the heart, which is not the result of ignorance, but of a deliberate, systematic, and persevering opposition to clearly-demonstrated and unmistakable truth.

*Ques.* What is the moral state of such sinners?

*Ans.* They have reached such a state of moral desperation that they will not ask or receive pardon on the conditions of the gospel. The unpardonable state is in the man, not in the unwillingness of God to forgive. The sign of this condition is utter moral insensibility. Wherever there is spiritual sensibility enough to make a man fear he has committed it, it is certain proof that he has not.

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### *LESSON X.*

Repeat Article XIII., in reference to the Church.

“The visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men, in which the pure word of God is preached, and the sacraments duly administered, according to Christ’s ordinance, in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same.”

PROOFS.—“Unto the Church of God, . . . to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours.” (1 Cor. i. 2.) “And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.” (Eph. iv. 11, 12.)

*Ques.* What four fundamental points are involved in the foregoing definition of a gospel Church?

*Ans.* In the analysis we have: (1) A congregation of faithful men. (2) The recognition of the Bible or the true word of God as the rule of faith and practice. (3) The recognition of the living ministry, to preach and expound this word. (4) The sacraments (baptism and the Lord’s Supper) properly administered. These are the four corner-stones of the Church, which Christ founded on the rock—his own divine character. The definition harmonizes perfectly with the elements found in the apostolic Church as described in the Acts of the Apostles, and allows all Methodists to recognize all other denominations that come in the scope of the foregoing definition as being gospel Churches.

*Ques.* What is the cause of denominational exclusiveness?

*Ans.* Denominational exclusiveness grows out of a false definition of what a gospel Church is. To illustrate, the Romanish authority defines a Church thus: "The company of Christians knit together by the profession of the same faith and communion of the same sacraments, under the government of lawful pastors, and especially of the Roman bishop as the only vicar of Christ on earth." Thus it makes the supremacy of the pope an essential element of a gospel Church. Consequently, it would logically follow that the Catholic is the only true Church. Hence Romish bigotry. The Baptists define: "A visible Church of Christ is a congregation of baptized [immersed] believers," etc. This definition cuts off all Churches whose members are not immersed. Hence their exclusiveness.

#### NOTES.

1. The entire body of regenerated believers in every period of time, in earth, or in heaven, is termed the general Church.

PROOF.—"I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named." (Eph. iii. 14, 15.)

2. All persons, adults or infants, baptized or unbaptized, in heathen or Christian lands, members or not members of the organized Church, who are in a salvable or justified state, constitute the invisible Church.

PROOF.—“Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.” (Acts x. 34, 35.)

3. Converted persons, while contending with evil on earth, constitute the Church militant; while those saved in heaven constitute the Church triumphant.

Repeat Article XIV., in reference to Purgatory.

“The Romish doctrine concerning purgatory, pardons, worshiping and adoration, as well of images as of relics, and also invocation of saints, is a fond thing, vainly invented, and grounded upon no warrant of Scripture; but repugnant to the word of God.”

PROOFS.—“Who can forgive sins but God only.” (Mark ii. 7.) “Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image.” (Ex. xx. 4.) “Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.” (Matt. iv. 10.)

*Ques.* What does this Article condemn?

*Ans.* This Article condemns a cluster of Romish errors. The first is that of purgatory. The doctrine of the Romish purgatory implies a second probation for certain men. But the Bible teaches that there is no second probation after death. "In the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be." (Eccl. xi. 3.) "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still." (Rev. xxii. 11.) "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." (Gal. vi. 7.) We are cleansed from sin not by purgatorial fires, but by the blood of Christ. There is not a single passage of scripture, properly expounded, favoring this doctrine. The second error is priestly absolution. God alone exercises the right to pardon sin. "Who can forgive sins but God only?" (Mark ii. 7.) The third is image-worship, which is positively forbidden. "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image." (Ex. xx. 4.) "I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which showed me these things. Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellow-servant: . . . worship God." (Rev. xxii. 8, 9.) The fourth error is praying to departed saints to intercede in



behalf of men on earth. This doctrine makes saints sub-mediators between God and men, whereas the word teaches that "there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." (1 Tim. ii. 5.)

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### LESSON XI.

Repeat Article XV., in reference to Speaking to the Congregation in such a Tongue as the People understand.

"It is a thing plainly repugnant to the word of God, and the custom of the Primitive Church, to have public prayer in the church, or to minister the sacraments, in a tongue not understood by the people."

PROOFS.—"He that speaketh in an unknown tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God: for no man understandeth him." "In the Church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, . . . than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue." (1 Cor. xiv. 2, 19.)

*Ques.* What does this Article condemn?

*Ans.* This Article justly condemns the Roman Catholic practice of reading the services in the Latin language to English congregations. It is "plainly repugnant to the word of God." To conduct the public prayers of

the Church in an unknown tongue is not only contrary to common sense, but to the custom of the Primitive Church. In 202 A.D. Origen said: "The Grecians pray to God in the Greek; the Romans, in the Roman; and every one in his own tongue." The modern practice of intoning prayers and other parts of religious worship is also unintelligible, and opposed to reasonable service."

Repeat Article XVI., in reference to the Sacraments.

"Sacraments, ordained of Christ, are not only badges or tokens of Christian men's profession, but rather they are certain signs of grace, and God's good will toward us, by the which he doth work invisibly in us, and doth not only quicken, but also strengthen and confirm our faith in him.

"There are two sacraments ordained of Christ our Lord in the gospel; that is to say, Baptism, and the Supper of the Lord.

"Those five, commonly called sacraments—that is to say, Confirmation, Penance, Orders, Matrimony, and Extreme Unction—are not to be counted for sacraments of the gospel, being such as have partly grown out of the *corrupt* following of the apostles, and partly are states

of life allowed in the Scriptures, but yet have not the like nature of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, because they have not any visible sign or ceremony ordained of God.

“The sacraments were not ordained of Christ to be gazed upon, or to be carried about; but that we should duly use them. And in such only as worthily receive the same, they have a wholesome effect or operation; but they that receive them unworthily purchase to themselves condemnation, as St. Paul saith, 1 Cor. xi. 29.”

PROOFS.—Christ ordained but two positive sacraments—Baptism and the Lord's Supper. See Matthew xxviii. 19; xxvi. 26; 1 Corinthians xi. 23.

*Ques.* What are the five sacraments.?

*Ans.* The five sacraments of the Catholic Church are: Confirmation, Penance, Orders, Matrimony, and Extreme Unction.

*Ques.* Define these sacraments.

*Ans.* Confirmation in the Roman Church is a service by which those baptized in infancy publicly take upon themselves the obligations of the baptismal covenant, and voluntarily confirm and recognize their Church-membership. The service in itself is proper enough, but not such in solemn dignity as to entitle

it to be placed in the same rank with baptism and the Lord's Supper. The same may be said of "orders" or the ordination ceremony of the ministry, and of matrimony. Roman penance is a service by which a penitent having sinned and made auricular confession, the priest grants pardon for sins committed after baptism. This so-called sacrament is founded upon the assumption that the priest has power to forgive sin, which Protestantism regards as blasphemous. Extreme unction is a service consisting in anointing with holy oil persons at the point of death, by which sins are forgiven and grace imparted.

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### *LESSON XII.*

Repeat Article XVII., in reference to Baptism.

"Baptism is not only a sign of profession, and mark of difference, whereby Christians are distinguished from others that are not baptized, but it is also a sign of regeneration, or the new birth. The baptism of young children is to be retained in the Church."

PROOFS.—"Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." (Acts xxii. 16.) "Except a man be born of water and of

the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” (John iii. 5.) “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.” (Mark xvi. 16.)

*Ques.* What does this Article define baptism to be?

*Ans.* 1. A sign of profession. It is a profession of faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God. When a person makes a profession of faith baptism is a sign of that profession, and a pledge of loyalty to God and the Church. It is a profession of faith in all the fundamental doctrines of salvation as taught by Christ. “See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. . . . And he baptized him.” (Acts viii. 36-38.)

2. Baptism is “a mark of difference whereby Christians are distinguished from others that are not baptized.” The Jew was distinguished from the Gentile by the significant mark or sign of circumcision. In the Christian Church baptism in the name of the Trinity takes the place of circumcision. By circumcision the Jew entered into the Jewish Church; by baptism we enter into the Christian Church.

3. It is also a sign of regeneration. The cleansing water is a fit sign of the cleansing power of the Holy Ghost.

Repeat Article XVIII., in reference to the Lord's Supper.

"The Supper of the Lord is not only a sign of the love that Christians ought to have among themselves one to another, but rather is a sacrament of our redemption by Christ's death: insomuch that to such as rightly, worthily, and with faith, receive the same, the bread which we break is a partaking of the body of Christ; and likewise the cup of blessing is a partaking of the blood of Christ.

"Transubstantiation, or the change of the substance of bread and wine in the Supper of the Lord, cannot be proved by Holy Writ, but is repugnant to the plain words of Scripture, overthroweth the nature of a sacrament, and hath given occasion to many superstitions.

"The body of Christ is given, taken, and eaten, in the Supper, only after a heavenly and spiritual manner. And the means whereby the body of Christ is received and eaten, in the Supper, is faith.

"The sacrament of the Lord's Supper was

not by Christ's ordinance reserved, carried about, lifted up, or worshiped."

PROOF.—"And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you." (Luke xxii. 19, 20.)

*Ques.* By what names is the Lord's Supper called?

*Ans.* It is called the "Lord's Supper," because it was first instituted in the evening, and at the close of the Passover supper. It is called a "sacrament," which means an oath of renewed allegiance to Christ. It is called the "Eucharist," which means the giving of thanks. "He took bread and gave thanks," a "communion" to express Christian fellowship.

*Ques.* What is its import?

*Ans.* The import of the Supper is a commemoration. "This do in remembrance of me." It took the place of the Passover, which commemorated the deliverance of the Israelites from Egyptian bondage. The suffering of Christ delivers the world from Satanic bondage. A father once kept a canceled bond for his family to look upon, and see how he had paid a heavy debt, through much

self-sacrifice, to make them happy. So Christ has canceled the claim of justice against us, "nailing it to his cross." In the Lord's Supper his family look upon this bond.

*Ques.* What have you to say about transubstantiation?

*Ans.* Transubstantiation is a Romish absurdity. Being in bodily person in heaven, and at the right hand of the throne of the Father, Christ cannot at the same time be visibly and bodily in the hands of the priests, nor on hundreds of altars at once. The expression, "This is my body," is a Hebraism for "This represents my body." It is clearly a figure, as: "I am the vine," "I am the door," "I am the way," "the seven good kine are seven years." Besides, if the bread and wine be actually changed into the real flesh and blood of Christ, how could these material things nourish and feed the soul, which is a spiritual substance? "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing" in feeding the soul. While the Lutherans renounce the doctrine of a *transubstantiation*, they affirm a *consubstantiation*, which is akin to the real presence of the Catholics. But in the light of common sense, both the *trans* and the *con*



are alike contrary to truth. The true doctrine is: A sacrament is a holy ordinance instituted by Christ, wherein by sensible signs Christ and the benefits of the new covenant are represented, sealed, and applied to believers. The sacrament is to be taken after a heavenly and spiritual manner. Its benefit depends upon the faith of the communicant. The astronomer does not worship the telescope, but looks through it out and beyond to the stars in the heavens. So the bread and wine are as a telescope, through which the eye of faith looks to Christ dying on the cross for the sins of the world. "This do in remembrance of me."

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*LESSON XIII.*

Repeat Article XIX., in reference to Both Kinds.

"The cup of the Lord is not to be denied to the lay people; for both the parts of the Lord's Supper, by Christ's ordinance and commandment, ought to be administered to all Christians alike."

PROOFS.—"He [Jesus] took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them [the disciples], saying,

Drink ye all of it.” (Matt. xxvi. 27.) “For as often as ye [believers in common] eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord’s death till he come . . . But let a man [the believer] examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.” (1 Cor. xi. 26–28.)

*Ques.* Were both bread and wine administered by Christ originally to the disciples?

*Ans.* Yes; both the bread and wine were originally administered by our Lord to the apostles, and both elements were ordered to be given to the lay people until the coming of Christ. The command is: “Drink ye all of it.” Surely Paul was not addressing the clergy when he wrote his epistle to the Corinthian Church, in which he said: “Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup.”

*Ques.* Out of what error does this one grow?

*Ans.* This Romish error grows out of the greater one of transubstantiation. The papists teach that after the bread and wine are changed into the flesh and blood of Christ he is whole and entire in either bread or wine; and so, whatever part the communicant may receive, he receives the whole of Christ. Therefore that Church has decreed to give “the laity only in one kind.” And whosoever

does not believe with that Church, it says: "Let him be accursed."

Repeat Article XX., in reference to the One Oblation of Christ, finished upon the Cross.

"The offering of Christ, once made, is that perfect redemption, propitiation, and satisfaction for all the sins of the whole world, both original and actual; and there is none other satisfaction for sin but that alone. Wherefore the sacrifice of masses, in which it is commonly said that the priest doth offer Christ for the quick and the dead, to have remission of pain or guilt, is a blasphemous fable and dangerous deceit."

PROOFS.—"So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many." (Heb. ix. 28.) "Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; . . . for in that he died, he died unto sin once." (Rom. vi. 9, 10.) "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." (Acts iv. 12.) "There remaineth no more sacrifice for sins." (Heb. x. 26.) "After he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God. . . . For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." (Heb. x. 12-14.)

*Ques.* What error is condemned by this Article?

*Ans.* This Article condemns as a blasphemous fable the dogma of the Catholic Church which affirms that Christ is offered afresh for sin every time the mass is celebrated, and teaches the Protestant doctrine that Christ made but one offering of himself for sin, and that this offering is perfect—complete in every respect—and forever final. Therefore “the Romish sacrifice of the mass has no sanction, but is utterly condemned in the Epistle to the Hebrews.”

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#### *LESSON XIV.*

Repeat Article XXI., in reference to Marriage of Ministers.

“The ministers of Christ are not commanded by God’s law either to vow the estate of single life, or to abstain from marriage; therefore it is lawful for them, as for all other Christians, to marry at their own discretion, as they shall judge the same to serve best to godliness.”

PROOFS.—The Apostle Peter was a married man. “When Jesus was come into Peter’s house, he saw his wife’s mother laid, and sick of a fever.” (Matt. viii. 14.) Philip the evangelist “had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy.” (Acts xxi. 9.) Paul says: “A bishop then must be blameless, the husband

of one wife." (1 Tim. iii. 2.) "Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife." (1 Tim. iii. 12.) "Have we not power to lead about . . . a wife, as well as other apostles?" (1 Cor. ix. 5.)

*Ques.* Does the Romish Church forbid her ministers to marry?

*Ans.* Yes; that Church has commanded her ministers not to marry, which command they strictly obey. And forbidding to marry is the sign of an apostate Church. (1 Tim. iv. 1-3.) But the Romish Church not only forbids marriage to her clergy, but has exalted the marriage of the laity to the unscriptural dignity of a sacrament. What bold absurdities and gross errors!

Repeat Article XXII., in reference to the Rites and Ceremonies of Churches.

"It is not necessary that rites and ceremonies should in all places be the same, or exactly alike; for they have been always different, and may be changed according to the diversity of countries, times, and men's manners, so that nothing be ordained against God's word. Whosoever, through his private judgment, willingly and purposely doth openly break the rites and ceremonies of the Church to which he belongs, which are not

repugnant to the word of God, and are ordained and approved by common authority, ought to be rebuked openly, that others may fear to do the like, as one that offendeth against the common order of the Church and woundeth the consciences of weak brethren.

“Every particular Church may ordain, change, or abolish rites and ceremonies, so that all things may be done to edification.”

PROOFS.—“As free, and not using your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of God.” (1 Pet. ii. 16.) “Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.” (Rom. xiv. 5.) “Let all things be done unto edifying.” (1 Cor. xiv. 26.) “The kingdom of God is not meat and drink.” (Rom. xiv. 17.)

*Ques.* What does this Article teach?

*Ans.* 1. The doctrines and institutions of the Christian religion are positive and unchangeable, while her rites and ceremonies are circumstantial. Baptism may be administered by pouring or immersion; the elements of the Lord's Supper may be received sitting or kneeling; prayers may be offered in public kneeling or standing; we may stand or sit in singing, etc.

2. This Article opposes the Catholics, who

maintain that the authority of the Church is supreme, and whatever rite she may ordain—though it becomes obsolete and useless—is of supreme and endless obligation. It teaches that whenever a ceremony becomes a hindrance to the real progress of the Church it is to be laid aside. When new ones are needed they are to be used. The law of expediency is to reign in these matters.

3. This Article also teaches that when rites and ceremonies are “ordained and approved” by the proper authorities of the Church they are not to be tampered with by private individuals. No person is allowed “through his private judgment” to set them aside. This secures uniformity in Church ceremonies.

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### *LESSON XV.*

Repeat Article XXIII., in reference to the Rulers of the United States of America.

“The President, the Congress, the general assemblies, the governors, and the councils of State, *as the delegates of the people*, are the rulers of the United States of America, according to the division of power made to them by the Constitution of the United States, and

by the Constitution of their respective States. And the said States are a sovereign and independent nation, and ought not to be subject to any foreign jurisdiction.”

PROOF.—“Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. . . . For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. . . . For he is the minister of God to thee for good.” (Rom. xiii. 1-4.)

*Ques.* What is the teaching of the Methodist Church in respect to obeying civil authority?

*Ans.* “As far as it respects civil affairs, we believe it the duty of Christians, and especially all Christian ministers, to be subject to the supreme authority of the country where they may reside, and to use all laudable means to enjoin obedience to the powers that be; and, therefore, it is expected that all our preachers and people, who may be under any foreign government, will behave themselves as peaceable and orderly subjects.” (Note of the Discipline.)

Repeat Article XXIV., in reference to Christian Men’s Goods.

“The riches and goods of Christians are not



common, as touching the right, title, and possession of the same, as some do falsely boast. Notwithstanding, every man ought, of such things as he possesseth, liberally to give alms to the poor according to his ability."

PROOFS.—"Thou shalt not steal." (Ex. xx. 15.) Stealing implies ownership of property. "Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away." (Matt. v. 42.) Giving and lending necessarily imply the personal ownership of property. "But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" (1 John iii. 17.)

*Ques.* For what purpose was this Article drawn up?

*Ans.* 1. This Article was drawn up to counteract the teaching of the Anabaptists, who, soon after the Lutheran Reformation, preached "that all things ought to be common among the faithful."

2. The instance of community of goods mentioned in Acts ii. 24 was not such as modern communists advocate. That of the early Christians was voluntary, local, and temporary. There was no forcible division of property. Peter said to Ananias: "While it remained, was it not thine own? and after

it was sold, was it not in thine own power?"—all of which shows that the common fund for benevolent purposes was made up by voluntary contributions. Besides, this instance was not general, but confined to the Church at Jerusalem.

Repeat Article XXV., in reference to a Christian Man's Oath.

"As we confess that vain and rash swearing is forbidden Christian men by our Lord Jesus Christ and James his apostle, so we judge that the Christian religion doth not prohibit but that a man may swear when the magistrate requireth, in a cause of faith and charity, so it be done according to the prophet's teaching, in justice, judgment, and truth."

PROOFS.—"And thou shalt swear, The Lord liveth, in truth, in judgment, and in righteousness." (Jer. iv. 2.) "Men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife." (Heb. vi. 16.) "Jonathan caused David to swear again." (1 Sam. xx. 17.) "I call God for a record upon my soul." (2 Cor. i. 23.)

#### NOTE.

Judicial oaths are believed to be lawful by all Christians, except the Anabaptists, who flourished about the time this Article was

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originally drawn up, and the Quakers and some minor sects. "Though it be said we shall not swear, yet I do not remember it is anywhere read that we should not receive or take an oath from another."—*St. Augustine.*

## CHAPTER III.

### The General Rules.\*

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“There is only one condition previously required of those who desire admission into these Societies—a ‘desire to flee from the wrath to come, and to be saved from their sins.’ But wherever this is really fixed in the soul, it will be shown by its fruits. It is therefore expected of all who continue therein that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation—

1. “First, by doing no harm, by avoiding evil of every kind, especially that which is most generally practiced: such as—

2. “The taking of the name of God in vain;

3. “The profaning the day of the Lord, either by doing ordinary work therein, or by buying or selling;

4. “Drunkenness, or drinking spirituous liquors, unless in cases of necessity;

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\*The General Rules of “The United Societies,” organized by Mr. Wesley in 1739.

5. "*Fighting*, quarreling, brawling; brother going to law with brother; returning evil for evil, or railing for railing; the using many words in buying or selling;

6. "The buying or selling goods that have not paid the duty;

7. "The giving or taking things on usury—*i. e.*, unlawful interest;

8. "*Uncharitable or unprofitable* conversation, particularly speaking evil of magistrates or of ministers;

9. "Doing to others as we would not they should do unto us;

10. "Doing what we know is not for the glory of God: as,

"The putting on of gold and costly apparel;

11. "The taking such diversions as cannot be used in the name of the Lord Jesus;

12. "The singing those songs, or reading those books, which do not tend to the knowledge or love of God;

13. "Softness or needless self-indulgence;

14. "Laying up treasure upon earth;

15. "Borrowing without a probability of paying, or taking up goods without a probability of paying for them.

"It is expected of all who continue in these

Societies that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation,

16. "Secondly, by doing good, by being in every kind merciful after their power, as they have opportunity, doing good of every possible sort, and, as far as possible, to all men;

17. "To their bodies of the ability which God giveth, by giving food to the hungry, by clothing the naked, by visiting or helping them that are sick or in prison;

18. "To their souls, by instructing, reproofing, or exhorting, all we have any intercourse with; trampling under foot that enthusiastic doctrine, that 'we are not to do good unless *our hearts be free to it.*'

19. "By doing good, especially to them that are of the household of faith, or groaning so to be; employing them preferably to others, buying one of another, helping each other in business; and so much the more because the world will love its own, and them *only.*

20. "By all possible *diligence* and *frugality*, that the gospel be not blamed.

21. "By running with patience the race which is set before them, *denying themselves, and taking up their cross daily*; submitting to bear the reproach of Christ, to be as the filth

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and offscouring of the world; and looking that men should say *all manner of evil of them falsely for the Lord's sake.*

22. "It is expected of all who desire to continue in these Societies that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation,

"Thirdly, by attending upon all the ordinances of God: such are,

23. "The public worship of God;

24. "The ministry of the word, either read or expounded;

25. "The Supper of the Lord;

26. "Family and private prayer;

27. "Searching the Scriptures; and

28. "Fasting, or abstinence."

## CHAPTER IV.

### The General Rules (Continued).

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#### LESSON XVI.

#### THE GENERAL RULES WITH SCRIPTURE QUOTATIONS AND NOTES.

*Ques.* What does the first rule require?

*Ans.* Rule 1. "Doing no harm, avoiding evil of every kind, especially that which is most generally practiced."

PROOFS.—"Abstain from all appearance of evil."  
(1 Thess. v. 22.) "Be ye therefore wise as serpents,  
and harmless as doves." (Matt. x. 16.) "Abhor  
that which is evil; cleave to that which is good."  
(Rom. xii. 9.)

#### NOTE.

There is nothing so deceitful as sin. There is a tree in the tropics called the Judas tree. Its beautiful blossoms attract the bees; they suck them, and die instantly. This fatal tree is like the tree of sin, which attracts to poison and kill. Be like the little animal called the ermine, that chooses rather to die than defile its white and beautiful fur. A tyrant once



ordered one of his subjects to make a strong chain. When the chain was finished the tyrant took it and bound the maker of it hand and foot, and cast him into prison. Sin is that tyrant that binds the sinner and casts him into outer darkness.

*Ques.* What does the second rule forbid?

*Ans.* Rule 2. "Taking the name of God in vain."

PROOF.—"Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain: for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain." (Ex. xx. 7.)

#### NOTE.

Swearing is a low, degrading, sinful practice. The swearer is like the foolish fish caught on a naked hook. "What does Satan pay you for swearing?" "Nothing," said the swearer. "Well, you work cheap—to lay aside the character of a gentleman, to inflict much pain upon your friends, suffer the remorse of conscience, and lastly to risk your own immortal soul—and all for nothing." The wild Indian, trampling beautiful paintings and sparkling jewels in mud, is no more degraded than the swearer, who pulls down the holy, sacred, reverent name of the great God and defiles it with shocking oaths.

*Ques.* What does the third rule forbid?

*Ans.* Rule 3. "The profaning the day of the Lord, either by doing ordinary work therein, or by buying or selling."

PROOF.—"Remember the Sabbath-day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: . . . wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath-day, and hallowed it." (Ex. xx. 8-11.)

#### NOTE.

"It is a blessed thing to have the Sunday devoted to God. There is nothing in which I would recommend you to be more strictly conscientious than in keeping the Sabbath holy. By this I mean not only abstaining from all unbecoming sports and common business, but from consuming time in frivolous conversation, paying or receiving visits, which, among relations, often leads to a sad waste of this precious day. I can truly declare that to me the Sabbath has been invaluable."—*Wilberforce.*

*Ques.* What does the fourth rule forbid?

*Ans.* Rule 4. "Drunkenness, or drinking

spirituous liquors except in cases of necessity."

PROOFS.—"Be not among winebibbers; . . . for the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty." (Prov. xxiii. 20, 21.) "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise." (Prov. xx. 1.) "Look not thou upon the wine when it is red. . . . At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder." (Prov. xxiii. 31, 32.) "Woe unto him that giveth his neighbor drink, that putteth thy bottle to him, and maketh him drunken also." (Hab. ii. 15.)

#### NOTES.

The new law of the Discipline requires "members to abstain from the manufacture or sale of intoxicating liquors as a beverage." As the whole system of the liquor business is closely connected, the law makes the man who makes and sells it guilty.

The still-houses make the poison; the grog-shops distribute it broadly over the land. The first is the originating fountain; the latter is the channel circulating the liquid poison. The production and circulation of liquor is closely connected. The distillers are busy in loading the Satanic battery; the retail and wholesale dealers are busy in firing it off. The consequence is that the battle-field of life runs

red with the blood of the slain. Every still and grog-shop is a battery of death. Think of the appalling number of them! According to official report there are in the United States eight thousand four hundred and two distilleries and breweries and two hundred thousand grog-shops and liquor-saloons. Under the generalship of Satan these batteries are loaded and fired day and night the year round, pouring bursting bombs, grape-shot, and all other missiles of death into the ranks of our people. What wide-spread destruction is wrought!

The *Presbyterian Review* gives the following statistics for the United States:

Paid to all ministers of the gospel . . . . \$	25,000,000
Support of criminals . . . . .	12,000,000
Fees of litigation . . . . .	35,000,000
Importation of liquor . . . . .	50,000,000
Support of grog-shops . . . . .	1,500,000,000
Whole cost of liquor . . . . .	12,200,000,000

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### LESSON XVII.

*Ques.* What does the fifth rule forbid.

*Ans.* Rule 5. "Fighting, quarreling, brawling; brother going to law with brother; returning evil for evil, or railing for railing; the using many words in buying or selling."

PROOFS.—“From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members?” (James iv. 1.) “The works of the flesh are manifest, which are these, . . . hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies.” (Gal. v. 19, 20.) “Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints?” (1 Cor. vi. 1.) “Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing.” (1 Pet. iii. 9.) “Let your conversation be without covetousness.” (Heb. xiii. 5.) “Let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation.” (James v. 12.)

## NOTE.

There are *quarrelsome* dispositions, *touchy* tempers, *irritable* tempers, *violent* tempers, *sullen* tempers—all of which are totally contrary to the loving spirit of religion. As a lump of sugar sweetens a cup of tea, so does the gentle Spirit of Christ sweeten the disposition of man. As the summer's sun changes green and acid fruit into a state of ripeness and sweetness, so the grace coming from the “Sun of righteousness” produces “the fruit of the Spirit,” which “is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.”

*Ques.* What does the sixth rule forbid?

*Ans.* Rule 6. "The buying or selling goods that have not paid the duty."

PROOFS.—"Provide things honest in the sight of all men." (Rom. xii. 17.) "Defraud ye not one the other." (1 Cor. vii. 5.) "Render therefore unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's." (Matt. xxii. 21.) "Render therefore to all their dues." (Rom. xiii. 7.)

NOTE.

To smuggle goods into a country in violation of the revenue laws of the government is the sin forbidden by this rule. To buy or sell goods known to be contraband is considered lawless robbery. It condemns that prevalent vice known by the name of "block-ading."

*Ques.* What does the seventh rule forbid?

*Ans.* Rule 7. "The giving or taking things on usury—that is, unlawful interest."

PROOFS.—"Lord, who shall dwell in thy holy hill?" "He that putteth not out his money to usury, nor taketh reward against the innocent." (Ps. xv. 1, 5.) "That no man go beyond and defraud his brother." (1 Thess. iv. 6.)

NOTE.

The Hebrew word for *usury* means exorbitant interest. It means greediness, sharpness, rapacity, which takes advantage of the op-

pressed. The practice forbidden is receiving more for the loan of money than it is really worth, and more than the law allows.

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### *LESSON XVIII.*

*Ques.* What does the eighth rule forbid?

*Ans.* Rule 8. "Uncharitable or unprofitable conversation, particularly speaking evil of magistrates or of ministers."

PROOFS.—"Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice." (Eph. iv. 31.) "Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment." (Matt. xii. 36.) "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth." (Eph. iv. 29.) "Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, . . . to speak evil of no man." (Tit. iii. 1, 2.)

### NOTE.

The practice of tale-bearing is disgraceful and sinful. To be known as a tattler, a gossip, a busybody in everybody's business is to bear a mean and low character. A back-biter reminds one of a sneaking dog, that makes the attack when your face is turned the other way. It is said of Domitian that he "employed his leisure hours in catching and tormenting flies." What a contemptible

business for a Roman emperor to be engaged in! But how much better is the employment of a professor of religion who is engaged in catching up and circulating damaging rumors about his neighbors? And especially are you forbidden to speak evil against ministers and official characters. An evil report is often a spark of fire kindling into a destructive conflagration—a swollen river bursting over its embankments, and spreading a flood of evils over the country.

*Ques.* What does the ninth rule forbid?

*Ans.* Rule 9. “Doing to others as we would not they should do unto us.”

PROOF.—“Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.” (Matt. vii. 12.)

#### NOTE.

Whatsoever is disagreeable to thyself do not to thy neighbor. Treat your neighbor as you would have him treat you. Regard him as your second self. As you would have him to be kind, polite, just, accommodating to you, be so to him. This is the golden rule of the gospel.

*Ques.* What does the tenth rule forbid?



*Ans.* Rule 10. "Doing what we know is not for the glory of God, as the putting on of gold and costly apparel."

PROOFS.—"Whose adorning, let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel." (1 Pet. iii. 3.) "I will . . . that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, . . . not with braided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array." (1 Tim. ii. 8, 9.)

#### NOTE.

The prohibition relates to needless extravagance in dress and useless and showy ornaments. The taste for the beautiful must be carefully limited by economical and religious considerations. Nothing so adorns a woman as a beautiful character, fruitful of good works.

*Ques.* What does the eleventh rule forbid?

*Ans.* Rule 11. "Taking such diversions as cannot be used in the name of the Lord."

PROOFS.—"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters." (2 Cor. vi. 17, 18.) "Be not conformed to this world." (Rom. xii. 2.) "Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God?" (Jas. iv. 4.)

## NOTES.

1. "Diversions" include those popular amusements—such as dancing, theaters, circuses, etc.—which divert or turn the heart away from God, to be fascinated by worldly things.

2. Our bishops explain the above rule as forbidding indulgence in the modern dance and attending circuses and theaters.

3. Our Church stands squarely opposed to the modern dance. The Presbyterian and Baptist Churches have made deliverances severely condemning dancing. Even the Roman Catholic Church "warns her people against the fashionable dances, which are fraught with the greatest dangers to morals."

*The Police*, of New York City, says that three-fourths of the corrupt girls in that city have been ruined by loose dancing. It is well known that as dancing increases in any community piety declines and dies out. There is no greater enemy to revivals of pure religion than the spirit and practice of dancing. Dancing also completely destroys the Christian influence of those who indulge in it. What good can a member of the Church do who is a lover of worldly dances? Worldly

men say: "See how these Christians dance. Why, they seem to love sinful amusements as much as we poor sinners do. Pretty Christians they are, indeed!" Put dancing in the scales of reason and religion, and weigh it in the balance of the Bible, and it will in every case be found wanting.

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### *LESSON XLX.*

*Ques.* What does the twelfth rule forbid?

*Ans.* Rule 12. "Singing those songs, or reading those books, which do not tend to the knowledge or love of God."

PROOFS.—"Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners." (1 Cor. xv. 33.) "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord." (Eph. v. 19.) "I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord." (Phil. iii. 8.)

### NOTE.

The evils of corrupt literature are very great in this age. It is said that fifty per cent. of the criminals of the United States were made by reading bad books, bad newspapers, and blood-and-murder stories in cheap novels. Such reading as glorifies cunning tricks, false-

hood, the dirk and pistol, corrupt the young and lead them in the paths of sin. Such singing as taints the heart and generates worldliness must be avoided.

*Ques.* What does the thirteenth rule forbid?

*Ans.* Rule 13. "Softness or needless self-indulgence."

PROOF.—"Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." (Matt. xvi. 24.)

#### NOTE.

A life of self-indulgence is as worthless as that of a butterfly that sails about on the air and does nothing but suck flowers. The luxury of Capua destroyed the brave army of Hannibal. As pills that are outwardly fair and sugar-coated, but have within bitterness, even so are luxurious pleasures. When Garrick showed Dr. Johnson his home, so full of luxury, carnal pleasures, and self-indulgence, the Doctor said: "Ah, David, David! these are the things which make a death-bed terrible."

*Ques.* What does the fourteenth rule forbid?

*Ans.* Rule 14. "Laying up treasure upon earth."

PROOF. — “Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” (Matt. vi. 19–21.)

### NOTE.

The rule strikes at the sin of covetousness, which is a dangerous and deadly one. The love of money is the root of all evil. King Midas prayed that every thing he touched might turn to gold. It was granted. It proved a fatal gift. The bread and water he touched turned to gold, and though he had plenty of gold, still he was in a state of misery and starvation. Money used as a means of accomplishing good is very valuable, but when it becomes a golden calf to be worshiped then it is a fatal possession. Not all accumulation is to be condemned. Joseph accumulated not for himself, but for the good of others. Money accumulated and used for noble purposes is commendable.

*Ques.* What does the fifteenth rule forbid?

*Ans.* Rule 15. “Borrowing without a probability of paying, or taking up goods without a probability of paying for them.”

PROOFS.—“The wicked borroweth, and payeth not again.” (Ps. xxxvii, 21.) “Render therefore unto all their dues.” “Owe no man any thing. (Rom. xiii. 7, 8.) “Provide things honest in the sight of all men.” (Rom. xii. 17.)

#### NOTE.

The rule condemns the incurring of pecuniary obligation when there is no reasonable ground for supposing that it can be paid. To do so is considered a fraud. To purchase goods without a probability of paying for them is condemned by our Church as a sin. We cannot be too careful as to borrowed property. Borrowed articles should be returned uninjured. We have no right to keep borrowed articles an undue length of time, nor allow them to be injured while in our possession, nor use them for any other purpose than the lender expected, nor return an inferior article for the one borrowed.

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#### LESSON XX.

GOOD OFFICES AND WORKS TO BE DONE.

*Ques.* Besides avoiding the evils mentioned, what else is expected of our members?

*Ans.* “It is expected of all who continue in these Societies that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation.”

Rule 16. 1. "By doing good." 2. "By being in every kind merciful after their power, as they have opportunity." 3. "Doing good of every possible sort, and, as far as possible, to all men."

PROOFS.—1. "Trust in the Lord, and do good." (Ps. xxxvii. 3.) "To do good and to communicate forget not." (Heb. xiii. 16.) 2. "Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy." (Matt. v. 7.) 3. "To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." (Jas. iv. 17.) "As we have . . . opportunity, let us do good unto all men." (Gal. vi. 10.)

NOTE.

"The best argument," says Christlieb, "for the truth of Christianity is a true Christian." Undoubtedly; and who is the truest Christian? He who is most like his Master; and since the most distinctive trait in his Master's character and career was disinterested, self-sacrificing, infinite love for others, it follows that he is most Christ-like who most loves and labors for the salvation of his brethren. The first question of the regenerated soul is: "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" The eyes of the newborn believer are anointed to see the moral havoc wrought by sin, and the desolating wretchedness certain to follow; and, see-

ing, he is constrained to do something to arrest the sinner. The heart that does not beat with tenderest sympathy and yearning anxiety over the woes of the wicked is either utterly blind or dead in its spiritual sensibilities. Society has many wants, many evils to cure, and many forms of good to be advanced. Society is like a building; it needs workers on the foundations and the walls and the finishing and the decorations. Society is like the human body; it has need of hands and feet and face and eyes and brain and heart.

*Ques.* What does the seventeenth rule enjoin?

*Ans.* Rule 17. Doing good "to their bodies of the ability which God giveth, by giving food to the hungry, by clothing the naked, by visiting or helping them that are sick or in prison."

PROOF.—"Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was a hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. . . . Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." (Matt. xxv. 34-40.)



## NOTE.

Christians are to be ready and willing to help the poor, the needy ; to visit the sick, to clothe the naked, and to feed the hungry. Who is there, then, that cannot work for Christ? With the world full of the ignorant to be instructed, and of the poor to be fed, and of inebriates to be reformed, and of the young to be guarded, and of the aged to be cheered, and of sinners to be regenerated and purified, assuredly every heir of a heavenly kingdom can find something to do.

“ When the plague was raging in Marseilles, and they were dying by scores and hundreds from it, the College of Surgeons decided that there must be a post-mortem examination, in order that they might know how to meet and arrest that awful disease. And there was silence in the College of Surgeons till Dr. Guion rose and said : ‘ I know it is certain death to dissect one of those bodies, but somebody must do it, and I shall. In the name of God and humanity I will do the work.’ He went home, made out his will; then went to the dissection, accomplished it, and in twelve hours died. That was self-sacrifice that the world understands. O the more wonderful sacrifice of the

Son of God ! He walked to Emmaus. He walked from Capernaum to Bethany. He walked from Jerusalem to Calvary. How far have you and I walked for Christ? His head ached, his heart ached, his back ached for us. How much have we ached for him? Let us this morning look over all the years of our life, and see the paltry list of our self-sacrifices. Not one deed in my life or in your life worthy the name !” \_\_\_\_\_

### LESSON XXI.

*Ques.* What does the eighteenth rule enjoin?

*Ans.* Rule 18. Doing good to the souls of men, “by instructing, reproofing, or exhorting all we have any intercourse with ; trampling under foot that enthusiastic doctrine, that ‘we are not to do good unless our hearts be free to it.’”

PROOFS.—“Reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine.” (2 Tim. iv. 2.) “Exhort one another daily.” (Heb. iii. 13.) “Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear.” (1 Tim. v. 20.) “Ye are the salt of the earth, . . . the light of the world.” (Matt. v. 13, 14.)

### NOTE.

We must do good continually, though our hearts feel indisposed to it. We are to trample

under foot the doctrine that "we are not to do good unless our hearts be free to it." "We want the burden to be light if we are to carry it, the church-pew soft if we are to sit in it, the work easy if we are to perform it, the sphere brilliant if we are to move in it, the religious service short if we are to survive it. On the way to heaven rock us, fan us, sing us to sleep, dandle us on the tips of your fingers, hand us up out of this dusty world toward heaven on kid gloves and under a silken sunshade. Let the martyrs who waded the flood and breasted the fire get out of the way while this colony of tender-footed Christians come up to get their crowns. O for more of that spirit which starts a man heavenward, determined to get there himself and to take everybody else with him!" •

*Ques.* How does the nineteenth rule require us to live?

*Ans.* Rule 19. "By doing good, especially to them that are of the household of faith, or groaning so to be; employing them preferably to others, buying one of another, helping each other in business; and so much the more because the world will love its own, and them only."

PROOFS.—“As we have . . . opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.” (Gal. vi. 10.) “Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another. . . . Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality.” (Rom. xii. 10-13.) “If ye were of the world, the world would love his own.” (John xv. 19.)

NOTE.

Methodism leads directly to a strong fraternization. Love is its life, and the mutual freedom and equality in Christ Jesus which characterizes all its social meetings and religious forms tend to centralize the sympathy and feelings of the whole community. And it is from this in part that the power of Methodism as a system arises. Unity is power; life is power. They sing truly :

“Our fears, our hopes, our aims are one—  
Our comforts and our cares.

“We share our mutual woes,  
Our mutual burdens bear;  
And often for each other flows  
The sympathizing tear.”

*Ques.* How does the twentieth rule require us to live?

*Ans.* “By all possible *diligence* and *frugality*, that the gospel be not blamed.”

PROOFS.—“Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.” (Rom. xii. 11.) “If any provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.” (1 Tim. v. 8.)

NOTE.

“Diligence is the mother of good luck, and God gives all things to industry. Then plow deep while sluggards sleep, and you will have corn to sell and to keep. Work while it is called to-day, for you know not how much you may be hindered to-morrow. One to-day is worth two to-morrows, as poor Richard says. And further: never leave that till to-morrow which you can do to-day.”—*Franklin*.

*Ques.* How does the twenty-first rule require Christians to live.

*Ans.* Rule 21. “By running with patience the race which is set before them, denying themselves, and taking up their cross daily; submitting to bear the reproach of Christ, to be as the filth and offscouring of the world, and looking that men should say all manner of evil of them falsely for the Lord’s sake.”

PROOFS.—“Seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset

us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us." (Heb. xii. 1.) "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." (Matt. xvi. 24.) "We are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day." (1 Cor. iv. 13.) "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake." (Matt. v. 11.)

#### NOTE.

"Patience is the guardian of faith, the preserver of peace, the cherisher of love, the teacher of humility. Patience governs the flesh, strengthens the spirit, sweetens the temper, bridles the tongue, tramples upon temptations, endures persecutions." Patience is but lying to and riding out the gale.

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### LESSON XXII.

#### ORDINANCES TO BE OBSERVED.

*Ques.* Besides doing the good mentioned, what else is expected of Methodists?

*Ans.* "It is expected of all who desire to continue in these Societies that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation:"

Rule 22. "By attending upon all the ordi-

nances of God," such as the "public worship of God."

PROOFS.—"One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple." (Ps. xxvii. 4.) "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is." (Heb. x. 25.)

Rule 23. "The ministry of the word, either read or expounded."

PROOFS.—Christ instituted the ministry and said: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, . . . teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." (Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.) "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." (Rom. x. 17.) "But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed." (Jas. i. 25.)

#### NOTES.

The Church requires you to attend public worship, and habitual neglect of this means of grace becomes a Church offense, to be punished by admonition or expulsion. The requirement is reasonable. Even heathens are worshipers of false gods. David exclaimed:

“O come, let us worship and bow down : let us kneel before the Lord our maker.” The Saviour was a regular attendant on public worship. Of him it is said : “As his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath.”

“I know of no place so rich, none so pure, none so hallowed in the influences and constant in their supply, as those resulting from the true and spiritual worship of God. Pleasant as the cool water-brooks are to a thirsty heart, so pleasant will it be to us to approach unto the living God.”—*R. Watson.*

*Ques.* What does the twenty-fourth rule require us to do?

*Ans.* Rule 24. To celebrate “the Supper of the Lord.”

PROOF.—“And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.” (Luke xxii. 19, 20.)

#### NOTES.

1. The Lord's Supper is a visible sacrament, instituted by our Saviour in the place of the Jewish Passover. The design of it is to be commemorative of the Lord's suffering and



death. The elements used are bread and wine, representing the broken body and shed blood of the Lord Jesus. All persons have the right to partake of the communion who have repented of their sins, have saving faith in Christ, and purpose to live a Christian life.

2. The obligations resting upon such persons to commune is very clear : (1) *It is the command of Christ.* The command, "This do in remembrance of me," is charged with divine authority. It is the same authority that binds all the commands of the Bible on the consciences of men. (2) *It is beneficial to the communicant.* God blesses in the use of the means of grace. He enlightens the world through the sun, and waters our fields by the clouds. So through the communion he pours light into the mind and refreshing grace into the heart. To remember the dying love of our blessed Lord as he hung on the cross is melting and purifying. —

### LESSON XXIII.

*Ques.* What does the twenty-fifth rule enjoin?

*Ans.* Rule 25. "Family and private prayer."

PROOFS.—"As for me and my house, we will serve the

Lord." (Josh. xxiv. 15.) "Pour out thy fury upon the heathen that know thee not, and upon the families that call not on thy name." (Jer. x. 25.) "When thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly." (Matt. vi. 6.)

#### NOTES.

*Importance of Family Prayer.* Philip Henry would say, sometimes: "If the worship of God be not in the house, write, 'Lord, have mercy upon us' upon the door, for there is a plague, a curse in it." Archbishop Tillotson said: "Constant family worship is so necessary to keep alive a sense of God and religion in the minds of men that I see not how any family that neglects it can, in reason, be esteemed a family of Christians, or indeed to have any religion at all."

John Howard never neglected the duty of family prayer, though there were but one, and that one a servant, to join him, always declaring that where he had a tent God should have an altar. The presence of no one was allowed to interfere with it, and every call of business must wait outside the locked door till it was ended.

An old writer affirms that a dwelling in

which prayer is not offered up daily to God is like a house without a roof, in which there cannot be either peace, safety, or comfort.

*Ques.* What is enjoined by the twenty-sixth rule?

*Ans.* Rule 26. "Searching the Scriptures."

PROOFS.—"I will meditate in thy precepts, and have respect unto thy ways. I will delight myself in thy statutes: I will not forget thy word." (Ps. cxix. 15, 16.) "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." (John v. 39.)

#### NOTES.

1. The reading of the Bible is profitable for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. Its truths are quick, powerful—sharper than any two-edged sword—stirring the consciences of men to repentance and reformation. The power of the Bible was the ground of Josiah's reformation; the use of the Bible, in contrast with the traditions of the Pharisees, was one of the striking characteristics of the revival inaugurated by Christ and the apostles; the disinterring and studying of the Bible was the secret of the great reformation in the sixteenth century; the close reading and practice of Bible truths, in contrast with the ritualistic services ap-

pointed to be read in the Church of England, was the moving power of the Wesleyan revival.

2. *The truths of the Bible to be searched for.* The truths of the Bible are like gold hidden in the soil, which whole generations of men walk over and never find. When men find them they call them new truths. One might as well call gold newly dug new gold.

3. *The Bible to be read daily.* A French noble read three chapters daily; Lady Hobert read the Psalms over twelve times a year; Dr. Gouge read fifteen chapters daily; Dr. Cotton read the whole Bible through twelve times a year.

*Ques.* What does the twenty-seventh rule require?

*Ans.* Rule 27. "Fasting, or abstinence."

PROOF.—"When ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: . . . but thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face; that thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret." (Matt. vi. 16-18.)

#### NOTES.

Christ did not condemn fasting, but criticised the hypocritical, perfunctory, and ostentatious performance of it as done by the

Pharisees. When you fast—which implies the duty of it—don't appear before men bowed down as a bulrush, clothed in sackcloth, making the heavens dark and the earth sad; but wear colors, carry flowers, anoint the head, wash the face; “that thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father.” Let your fasting be internal, not external.

The Church requires its members to fast because it is a means of grace. “So, then, one of the first things to be considered in fasting as a means of grace is that it gives a man the use of a healthy body and a healthy brain, which is no small thing. It is of tremendous importance. It is the foundation of all benefit, though it is not the whole of benefit. Then a period of fasting, properly instituted, together with associated influences, gives rest to the wasteful passions by the cultivation of moral feeling. Where men diminish their food, and put themselves in a condition in which they meditate upon themes of transcendent importance, upon high moral and spiritual themes and relationships, laterally or vertically, toward man or toward God, toward the visible or toward the invisible, so that their better feelings have a chance to

spring up because the pressure of the passions is taken off from them, what an advantage it is to them !”

“These are the General Rules of our Societies; all of which we are taught of God to observe, even in his written word, which is the only rule, and the sufficient rule, both of our faith and practice. And all these we know his Spirit writes on truly-awakened hearts. If there be any among us who observe them not, who habitually break any of them, let it be known unto them who watch over that soul, as they who must give an account. We will admonish him of the error of his ways : we will bear with him for a season ; but if then he repent not, he hath no more place among us : we have delivered our own souls.”

## CHAPTER V.

### Prominent Doctrines of Methodism.

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#### LESSON XXIV.

##### I. UNIVERSAL REDEMPTION.

*Ques.* What does the Methodist Church teach as to the extent of the atonement?

*Ans.* Methodism teaches that the atonement of Christ is universal in its extent—that it is broad enough to cover all the sins of all the children of Adam from the beginning to the end of time. It teaches that the sacrifice of Christ derived infinite value from the divinity of his person, and is therefore intrinsically sufficient to expiate the sins of the whole human race, and was really so intended. This is Arminianism.

*Ques.* What does Calvinism teach?

*Ans.* Calvinism teaches that “Christ died exclusively for the elect, and purchased redemption for them alone, and in no sense did he die for the rest of the race;” that “the atonement of Christ is specific and limited;”

that "it is neither universal nor indefinite, but restricted to the elect alone."

*Ques.* What is the difference between Calvinism and Arminianism?

*Ans.* According to Calvinism, the salvation or the non-salvation of each human being depends absolutely and solely on the eternal, irresistible decree of God, made "without any foresight of faith or good works in the creature, as conditions or causes moving him thereto." According to this system, God has elected to eternal life a certain, definite, unalterable number, and passed the rest of mankind by unredeemed, to perish in their sins. Hence it teaches a partial atonement, irresistible grace, and final perseverance as flowing out from the decrees. Arminianism teaches that "Christ died for all men," for "the whole world," and that the salvation or non-salvation depends not on arbitrary decree, but upon the willingness or unwillingness of each man to comply with the gospel conditions of salvation.

Give the proof that Christ died for all men.

That Jesus Christ died for all men is clearly and expressly taught in the following scriptures :



PROOFS.—“That he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.” (Heb. ii. 9.) “He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.” (1 John ii. 2.) “The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men.” (Tit. ii. 11.) “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” (John iii. 16.) “That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.” (John i. 9.) “God our Saviour . . . will have all men to be saved.” (1 Tim. ii. 3, 4.) “For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead.” (2 Cor. v. 14.)

*Queæ.* What follows if Christ died for all?

*Ans.* If Christ died for all men, then all are placed in a salvable condition. The sins of every man are atoned for, a pardon for every man is purchased, and every man is welcome to the favor of God and everlasting life. It follows that a decree of reprobation, absolutely predestinating any human being to eternal damnation, is impossible. In harmony with the doctrine that Christ died for all men the duty to believe in him as a Saviour is enjoined upon all.

PROOFS.—“He that believeth . . . shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.” (Mark xvi. 16.) “He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because

he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." (John iii. 18.)

*Ques.* If all can be saved, what are ministers authorized to do?

*Ans.* In harmony with the scheme of universal redemption, gospel ministers are authorized to preach free salvation to all men.

PROOFS.—"Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." (Mark xvi. 15.) "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that hear-eth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." (Rev. xxii. 17.) "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." (Matt. xi. 28.) "Him that cometh to me I will in nowise cast out." (John vi. 37.)

*Ques.* On whom is the blame of man's condemnation laid?

*Ans.* Men are constantly charged with the blame of their own ruin. "For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye." (Ezek. xviii. 32.) We might quote every chapter in the prophets to show that the Israelites were blamed as the cause of their own ruin, but it is needless to enlarge. The whole Bible testifies that men are truly the authors of their own destruction. God often

complains that he has striven to save men, but they would not let him. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, . . . how often I would have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" (Matt. xxiii. 37.) He "will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." (1 Tim. ii. 4.)

NOTE.

The argument from reason is as definite and conclusive. Does not every man's own conscience tell him that he is the author of his own sins, and consequently of the punishment flowing from them? Does not conscience accuse us, holding that we alone are to blame for them? Thus the testimony of conscience sustains the Arminian doctrine. Yet Calvinism teaches that God, "for the sake of his own glory," created man to be lost—created pain and stamped it with immortality—that "God did create a race, large portions of whom, not being elected, would go on to eternal punishment, suffering forever and ever hopelessly—all 'for his own glory.'" Can there be any glory in creating and dooming millions of the human race to perdition, just for the sake of seeing them suffer? Is there "glory" in a

government over this universe in which there is suffering without any other end than suffering? Can there be any better definition of Satanic malignity given than that it is a voluntary creation of suffering merely for the sake of suffering? Finally, the salvation of every human being is possible or it is not possible. If it is possible, then the possibility is based on the universality of the atonement, for none can be saved outside of the atonement. If the salvation of every man is not possible, then men are damned for not performing an impossibility, which is too monstrous for any sane man to believe. But as Methodists we glory in the full, free, and universal redemption of Christ.

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## LESSON XXV.

### II. REPENTANCE.

*Ques.* What does our Church teach on the doctrine of repentance?

*Ans.* That personal repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ are always united in the Bible. Repentance implies a certain kind of pre-existing faith, and faith implies a pre-existing repentance. Both

are produced by the preliminary grace of the Holy Spirit, but not perfected without the co-operation of man. Repentance is a means, and faith a condition of salvation. The broken and contrite heart, a godly sorrow of soul, a keen sense of sin, prepare the soul to accept Christ as the only Saviour. Such a state of mind leads to a free and candid confession of sin; and this leads to reformation. This reformation implies two things—viz., a turning from sin and a serious effort at obedience. The Bible commands the penitent: “Cease to do evil; learn to do well.” Repentance is pre-eminently a personal obligation. It is a duty laid upon all men.

PROOFS.—God “now commandeth all men everywhere to repent.” (Acts xvii. 30.) “Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” (Matt. iii. 2.) “Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.” (Acts ii. 38.) “Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.” (Isa. lv. 7.) “Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin.” (Ezek. xviii. 30.) “Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.” (Luke xiii. 3.)

*Ques.* What must true repentance be?

*Ans.* True repentance must be thorough, forsaking all sin. If a ship have three leaks, the stopping of two of them is not sufficient; the third one, left unstopped, will sink it; all must be closed up. Or if a man have two dangerous wounds, the curing of one is not enough. Both must be cured. A tree fallen upon the bosom of a river sways up and down on the stream, but does not float off down the stream because it is anchored by a hidden root reaching into the bank. So one secret sin not given up will keep the soul from floating on the stream of grace into the kingdom of life.

*Ques.* Unto what does gospel repentance lead?

*Ans.* Gospel repentance leads to an open and full confession of sin. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us." The benefit of confession is illustrated in the following story: A German prince visited the arsenal at Toulon, where the galleys were kept. The commandant, as a compliment to his rank, offered to set at liberty any slave whom he selected. The prince went the round of the prison, and conversed with the prison-

ers. He inquired into the reason of their confinement, and met only with universal complaints of injustice, oppression, and false accusation. At last he came to one man who admitted his imprisonment to be just. "My lord," said he, "I have no reason to complain; I have been a wicked, desperate wretch, and it is a mercy that I am here." The prince selected him, saying: "This is the man whom I wish released." The application is easy.

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## LESSON XXVI.

### III. JUSTIFICATION.

*Ques.* What does our Church teach about justification?

*Ans.* That "justification is the divine judicial act which applies to the sinner believing in Christ the benefit of the atonement, delivering him from the condemnation of his sin, introducing him into a state of favor, and treating him as a righteous person." "To be justified is to be pardoned and received into God's favor, into such a state that if we continue therein we shall be finally saved."—*Methodist Minutes.*

Justification, pardon, and forgiveness of sins

are substantially the same in Methodist theology.

This pardon extends to all sins in the past, little or great. "All manner of sin" is forgiven; so "there is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus." The originating cause is the love of God; the meritorious cause is the atonement of Christ; the instrumental cause is the personal faith of the believer.

PROOFS.—"God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John iii. 16.) "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness [or justification] to every one that believeth." (Rom. x. 4.) "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." (Rom. v. 1.) "By him [Christ] all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." (Acts xiii. 39.) "To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness [or justification]." (Rom. iv. 5.) "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." (Rom. iii. 28.)

*Ques.* How is pardon obtained?

*Ans.* It is by the exercise of faith which embraces Christ, rests upon him as a house upon a rock foundation, enters into his right-



eousness for safety, as Noah entered the ark for protection from the flood. It acknowledges the utter impossibility of being saved by personal obedience to the law. To become righteous in that way is forever out of the question. It confesses past sins, present weakness, and the impossibility of canceling past transgressions by future obedience. Justifying faith is then the trust of the soul in Christ as the only hope of salvation. It is the forsaking of the sinking ship of self-righteousness, and taking refuge in the ark of Christ's atonement.

*Ques.* How is saving faith proved?

*Ans.* The genuineness of this saving faith is proved by evangelical works of righteousness, without which the state of justification cannot be retained. The works of faith declare (manifest) the life and reality of saving faith. The tree of justifying faith is known by the fruits of good works. The substance of faith will project the shadow of good works. Hence there is a justification by faith without the merit of works, and a justification by faith on the evidence of works, but in both cases justification is based on the grace of the atonement.

## LESSON XXVII.

### IV. REGENERATION.

*Ques.* What does our Church teach in reference to regeneration?

*Ans.* That regeneration is the new birth—that work of the Holy Spirit by which we experience a change of heart. It is expressed in the Scripture by being born again, by being quickened, by our partaking of the divine nature. “The efficient cause of regeneration is the Divine Spirit.”—*R. Watson.*

PROOFS.—“Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” (John iii. 3.) “That ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.” (Eph. iv. 24.) “If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature.” (2 Cor. v. 17.)

*Ques.* What is the difference between justification and regeneration?

*Ans.* Justification is the removal of guilt, while regeneration is the removal of the pollution of sin. Justification is an act taking place in the court of heaven, while regeneration is a work performed by the Holy Spirit in and upon the soul of the believer. Justification therefore is objective, while regeneration is always subjective. Regeneration is the birth of a newborn babe. The infant born

into the world is the man in miniature; all the parts of the body and all the faculties of the mind are there in embryo. So the regenerated person is a saint in embryo. The new principles are there, the new affections are there, the saint is there, but in infancy. The young twig two feet high is an oak, yet there is a vast difference between its diminutive size and the full-grown oak, covering with its wide-spreading branches an acre of ground. The "kingdom of God is like a grain of mustard-seed, which, when it is sown in the earth, is less than all the seeds that be in the earth: but when it is sown, it groweth up, and cometh greater than all herbs, and shooteth out great branches."

*Ques.* Is regeneration merely an outward reformation?

*Ans.* Regeneration is more than outward reformation. "Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin." Mark the thoroughness of this desire. Not only must sin be blotted out, but the sinner himself must be washed and cleansed. There must be not merely a change of state, but a change of nature. Not only must the debt be forgiven, but all disposition to contract further

debt must be eradicated. Outward reformation is cutting the bird's wings, but leaving it with the propensity to fly. It is pulling out the lion's teeth, but not changing the lion's nature. A vicious horse is none the better tempered because the kicking-straps prevent his dashing the carriage to pieces. Regenerating grace, like a lump of sugar in a cup of tea, sweetens the heart of man. It makes the tree good to get good fruit. It purifies the fountain of the heart, and then the practical stream of life will be pure.

*Ques.* Is the new birth a necessity in order to be qualified to enjoy heaven?

*Ans.* It is. None can go to heaven unless they are made holy. "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Purity is a necessary qualification to enjoy heaven. If a sinner were lifted to heaven, he would be blind to its beauties, deaf to its songs, and dead to its joys. While malice remains in the devil's nature, were he admitted into heaven it would be a place of torment. So a wicked man would meet hell in the midst of heaven, so long as he carries within him sin, for sin kindles the fire of hell in the soul. The kingdom of God is

“righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.”

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### LESSON XXVIII.

#### V. WITNESS OF THE SPIRIT.

*Ques.* What is meant by the witness of the Spirit?

*Ans.* “By the witness of the Spirit I mean an inward impression on the soul, whereby the Spirit of God immediately and directly witnesses to my spirit that I am a child of God; that Jesus Christ hath loved me and given himself for me; that all my sins are blotted out, and I, even I, am reconciled to God.”—*John Wesley.*

PROOFS.—“The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.” (Rom. viii. 16.) “He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself.” (1 John v. 10.) “Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.” (Gal. iv. 6.) “The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost.” (Rom. v. 5.) “The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.” (Gal. v. 22, 23.)

*Ques.* Can a man know that he is a Christian?

*Ans.* Methodistic teaching answers, “Yes.”

Mr. Wesley says : "The soul intimately and evidently perceives when it loves, delights, and rejoices in God, as when it loves and delights in any thing. I love and delight in God; therefore I am a child of God." The Bible furnishes certain marks of being a Christian. First, there is the love of God "shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost." The believer feels, knows, is conscious that he loves God ; therefore he says "I am a child of God." Mr. Wesley says that when he was converted he felt his heart strangely warmed." We are just as conscious of the warming influence of love as we are of a fire in a room, or of the genial beams of the sun breaking through the cloud on a cold day and shining upon us. Love is likened to fire, and fire is something that can be sensibly felt. Secondly, fraternal love is a mark of a Christian. The believer feels that he loves all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity ; therefore he concludes, "I am a child of God." "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Brotherly love is adduced as a proof of having passed from death to life. Again: "He that loveth his brother abideth in the light."

NOTE.

“Now, there are some things that we know. When a man is enraged he knows it, and other people generally know it too. When a man is full of spirit he usually knows it. When a man has the inspiration of ambition, and he is a fiery and energetic man he knows that. A man knows whether he is in distress; he knows whether he is eager; he knows whether he is forceful or mild. A man knows whether it is his pleasure to do good, or whether he does it graciously. These things are within the sphere of positive knowledge. A man knows whether he loves or not; for if he does not know that he loves he does not love, and he may be sure of it. There are some things that are like fire; and what would you say of one who should put his hand in the fire, and take it out slowly and look at it deliberately, and say: ‘On the whole I think it burns?’ Men know what is evil; they know what is good. All the recognized things within the sphere of knowledge they know with positiveness, with all the positiveness that is required; nor does it necessarily infer conceit.

“Take notice, then, in regard to this witness, that light is thrown upon the method of it.

We do not have this witness borne in upon us in consequence of any actions of our own, standing upon which we reason to it ourselves. It is not the result of retrospect; it is not from any estimate that we form of our moral worth. The soul's spontaneous affinity for God being disclosed in us becomes itself the evidence. We find ourselves possessed of a certain enthusiasm. We are lifted up, fired with an unusual experience—not a superhuman experience, and yet an experience transcending all ordinary experience, and the nature of it is that of love. It is an experience which, acting in love, draws us by elective affinities to the great Source and Fountain of love, as well as of wisdom and power—God; and this condition of the soul which produces filial love is the sign of God's influence upon us. It is the witness of the Spirit."

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### LESSON XXIX.

#### VI. HOLINESS, OR SANCTIFICATION.

*Ques.* What is holiness or sanctification?

*Ans.* "Sanctification is that work of God's grace by which we are renewed after the image of God, set apart for his service, and ena-



bled to die unto sin and live unto righteousness. It comprehends all the graces of knowledge, faith, repentance, love, humility, zeal, and patience, and the exercise of them toward God and man.”—*R. Watson.*

PROOFS.—“The very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless.” (1 Thess. v. 23.) “This is the will of God, even your sanctification.” (1 Thess. iv. 3.) “As he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation.” (1 Pet. i. 15.) “Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.” (Tit. ii. 14.) “We are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ.” (Heb. x. 10.) “Herein is our love made perfect.” (1 John iv. 17.)

*Ques.* What is the nature of holiness?

*Ans.* It is the conformity of the heart and life to the law of God. It is the casting out of those inbred sins, the purification of the moral nature, and the restoration of the image of God, so that the soul is all glorious within, having the fruit of the Spirit—“love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.” It implies the consecration of the whole body, the whole heart, the whole spirit, the whole mind, prop-

erty, influence, family, all to the service of God.

Sanctification brings the intellect of the Christian into captivity to Christ, so that he thinks for him; puts the love of God in his heart, so that he is unselfish and beneficent; puts the life of righteousness into his conscience, so that the law of right is his rule; puts the life of obedience into his will, so that it is his meat and drink to do the will of the Father.

*Ques.* When can the grace be attained?

*Ans.* The Catholic Church teaches that sanctification with some is attained after death through the fires of purgatory; the Calvinists, that it can be attained only in the article of death. The Methodists maintain that it may be attained soon after conversion, and enjoyed during life. All agree then that holiness—perfect love, sanctification—is absolutely necessary as a qualification for heaven. The difference is simply in the time of its attainment. The Arminian view is unquestionably correct and scriptural. Our doctrine hereby elevates the plane of Christian experience immeasurably higher than the other view. The Catholic doctrine that men are sanctified in

purgatory is simply absurd. To send a soul to hell to purify it, how ridiculous! Why is not the devil purified? He has been in hell long enough to be very pure, if that be the place of purification. The Calvinistic theory has no scriptural foundation. There is no virtue in the mere act of dying to sanctify the soul.

*Ques.* Why should we strive to be perfect Christians?

*Ans.* 1. Because God wills it. "For this is the will of God, even your sanctification." God wills our sanctification just as truly and sincerely as he wills the salvation of sinners or any other desirable thing. There can be no higher law than the will of God.

2. Because God commands it. "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." "Be perfect"—not in knowledge or power, as God, but in love and holiness. "Be perfect"—not in degree, as God, but in quality, in kind.

3. Because this great blessing is promised. "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you." (Ezek. xxxvi. 25.) "If we confess our

sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John i. 9.) "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly." Does not this passage mean entire sanctification? Do we have to wait till death for this?

## CHAPTER VI.

### Prominent Doctrines of Methodism.

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#### LESSON XXX.

##### VII. APOSTASY.

*Ques.* What is the view of our Church on the doctrine of falling from grace?

*Ans.* That it is possible for a person who has been truly regenerated to fall away from such a gracious state, and be finally lost. This doctrine is clearly taught in the Old Testament Scriptures.

PROOFS. — “But when the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and doeth according to all the abominations that the wicked man doeth, shall he live? All his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned: in his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die.” “When a righteous man turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and dieth in them; for his iniquity that he hath done shall he die.” (Ezek. xviii. 24, 26.)

*Ques.* What does the above passage teach?

*Ans.* 1. That the persons referred to in this passage were truly righteous men. Mr.

Edwards concedes that a righteous man in Scripture phrase denotes a "godly man."

2. The drift of the whole passage shows that these righteous persons may totally turn away and perish in their sins.

3. Man's life on earth is a period of trial. He has all the endowments necessary to make him a free and responsible agent. In this character there is no time on earth when he is not subject to change of moral character. As a sinner he may repent, reform, and become a good man all along the path of his probation. There is no point along this probationary road up to the hour of death where he may not repent and believe; or, being good, may relapse into sin and perish.

*Ques.* Where else is this doctrine taught?

*Ans.* The possibility of total and final apostasy is expressly declared in the New Testament.

PROOF.—"For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame." (Heb. vi. 4-6.)

*Ques.* What does the above scripture teach?

*Ans.* That these persons were Christians of deep experience. 1. They were "enlightened." 2. They had "tasted of the heavenly gift." This may mean the experience of a gracious pardon. 3. They were "made partakers of the Holy Ghost." This includes the work of regeneration, the witness of the Holy Spirit, and his indwelling influence. 4. They had "tasted the good word of God." This means the Christian's relish and comfort in reading the Scriptures. 5. They had tasted "the powers of the world to come." By this we understand the delightful anticipation of heaven. Here are all the marks and fruits of experienced Christians. But these persons may fall away and finally perish. The whole drift of the passage teaches this. The Greek scholars agree that the term "if" is not in the original passage. Mr. Wesley proves that it is not there, and says it should read: "It is impossible to renew again unto repentance those who have been once enlightened and have turned away and renounced the Saviour, the only refuge for sinners." The fall contemplated is total and final, and the possibility of such is borne on the very face of the passage.

*Ques.* Is this doctrine taught anywhere else?

*Ans.* The same doctrine is taught by our Saviour.

PROOFS.—“I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away.” “I am the vine, ye are the branches.” “If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.” (John xv. 1, 2, 5, 6.)

*Ques.* What does this passage teach?

*Ans.* 1. That the persons spoken of were branches in the vine—that is, in Christ. 2. Some of these branches were cut off, because they did not bear fruit. 3. Being severed from the vine, the only source of life, they hopelessly died, withered, dried up, and were gathered up and burned.

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### LESSON XXXI.

*Ques.* In what other way does this doctrine appear in the Bible?

*Ans.* The possibility of final apostasy appears from the repeated warnings against such danger, and the earnest exhortations to Christian faithfulness.

PROOFS.—“Because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not high-minded, but fear: for if God spared not the natural branches, take



heed lest he also spare not thee." (Rom. xi. 20, 21.) "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called to-day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end." (Heb. iii. 12-14.) "Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." (Heb. iv. 1.)

*Ques.* What does this passage teach?

*Ans.* That all these exhortations to fear, to be diligent, to put forth effort, undoubtedly imply the possibility of failure. It is a palpable absurdity to exhort men to hold on to that which it is impossible for them to lose. A Christian can or cannot fall from grace. If he cannot fall, then the exhortation not to fall is absurd and senseless. Suppose a man on some high mountain is chained to a rock with iron fetters that cannot be broken, and another should stand off shouting, "Take heed lest you fall!" would not the exhortation be ridiculous nonsense? The application is easy.

*Ques.* What do certain examples contained in the Scriptures teach?

*Ans.* The possibility of falling from grace.

PROOF.—"Holding faith, and a good conscience;

which some having put away, concerning faith have made shipwreck: of whom is Hymeneus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme." (1 Tim. i. 19, 20.)

*Ques.* What does this passage teach?

*Ans.* 1. That these persons once had faith and a good conscience, else they could not have wrecked or cast away what they never had. 2. They made shipwreck of this saving faith. 3. What is shipwrecked is entirely lost. A wrecked vessel is totally ruined. Angels fell from their original state of celestial holiness. Our first parents fell from their original purity. Judas fell from his apostleship by transgressions. King Saul was once a good man. "God gave him another heart," but he fatally backslid, and "died for his transgressions which he committed against the Lord." Solomon was clearly at one time a saintly man, but he evidently apostatized, and "died," says Josephus, "ingloriously."

#### NOTE.

The dogma "once in grace always in grace" is a very fatal error. A man gets a ticket, sits down in the cars, folds his hands, and says to himself: "Well, I bought my ticket, I am on the train, and now I will go to sleep. It is the

engineer's business to run the train and watch out for danger. It is the business of the conductor to land me safely at my journey's end. I have nothing to do but to sleep." This is about the way men reason who believe in final perseverance. Any one can see the deadening and sleep-producing influence which this doctrine has upon the human heart. But the Bible, instead of encouraging such a state, commands us to watch. "Work out your own salvation;" "Give all diligence to make your calling and election sure." Hundreds of warnings stand all through the Bible, like mountains, with a gloomy grandeur—stern, portentous, awful, and sublime, as Mount Sinai when the Lord descended upon it in fire, storm-clouds, and thunders that shook the hills of the earth, "that the fear of God may be upon us, and that we sin not." They sternly rebuke the folly of supposing that because God has delivered us from our former sins we need have no anxiety about our final salvation.

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### *LESSON XXXII.*

#### ORDERS IN THE MINISTRY.

*Ques.* How many orders does the Methodist Church recognize?

*Ans.* Methodism recognizes but two orders in the ministry—the deacon and presbyter. It also recognizes a third office—that of bishop, which is presbyterial in order, but episcopal in office. Methodism occupies medium ground between prelacy on the one hand and parity of the ministry on the other. Roman Catholics and the Episcopalians believe in three orders—those of a bishop, presbyter, and deacon. Presbyterians, Baptists, and Congregationalists maintain one order only—that of the presbyter. We believe that two orders are recognized in the Bible.

### I. DEACON.

*Ques.* What is a deacon in our Church?

*Ans.* The deaconship is a subordinate grade and order of the ministry. Deacons among Presbyterians and Baptists are simply lay officers, but among Methodists they are a subordinate order of ministers. Methodism here is on scriptural ground. Stephen was a deacon, one of the “first seven.” He was a powerful preacher, being “full of the Holy Ghost.” When the Jews heard the sermon which is recorded in Acts vii. “they were cut to the heart.” He was duly ordained by the apostles. Philip was another deacon and a preach-

er. "Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them." (Acts viii. 5.) He had a great revival at that place. "But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women." "And there was great joy in that city." Philip expounded the Scriptures to the "Ethiopian eunuch," and administered to him the rite of baptism. The point we make is that deacons are ministers, which is clearly proved by the above citations of Scripture. A Methodist deacon can perform all the ministerial functions of an elder except that of consecrating the elements of the Lord's Supper.

## II. ELDER.

*Ques.* What is the office of an elder?

*Ans.* 1. Presbyter, or elder, is a higher order and office of the ministry. It designates an order of men whose duties are to preach, to administer the ordinances, and watch over the Church. "The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder." "Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof." (1 Pet. v. 1, 2.)

2. Elders have authority of governing the

Churches. "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor." (1 Tim. v. 17.) "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves." (Heb. xiii. 17.)

3. Elders have the power of ordination. Timothy was ordained by "the laying on of the hands of the presbytery," or body of elders. See 1 Timothy iv. 14. They were associates of ecclesiastical authority with the apostles. The decrees passed at Jerusalem to regulate the Churches "were ordained of the apostles and elders." See Acts xv. 2-6, 22, 23; Acts xvi. 4; 1 Timothy v. 17. As all Churches agree that the eldership is an ecclesiastical order, it is not necessary to dwell longer on this subject.

### III. BISHOP.

*Ques.* What is the office of a bishop?

*Ans.* "Bishops are not a distinct order, but officers elected by the body of elders for general superintendency and for greater convenience in regard to ordination, and to secure unity and greater efficiency in administration, and this was unquestioned for hundreds of years. Now Methodism conforms to this primitive arrangement." "Bishops and presbyters, or elders, were originally the same; but,

as Jerome says, one of the elders was chosen as a president, and called bishop by way of distinction; and some of the functions pertaining to the whole body of the presbyters—as ordination, for example—were committed to him, and, like the name, confined to him. Thus he became *primus inter pares*—first among equals.”—*Bishop McTyeire.*

## CHAPTER VII.

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### LESSON XXXIII.

#### MODE OF BAPTISM.

*Ques.* What are the essential elements of baptism?

*Ans.* The essential elements of baptism are:

1. It must be administered in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

2. It must be performed by a gospel minister. No others are commissioned to baptize but ministers of Christ.

3. The element to be used must be water only. This only is mentioned in the Scriptures.

4. The person baptized must be a proper subject.

*Ques.* What then is Christian baptism?

*Ans.* We conclude that water applied in the name of the Trinity, by a gospel minister to a proper candidate, is Christian baptism. "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the



Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” (Matt. xxviii. 19.)

*Ques.* What follows from this definition?

*Ans.* It will be seen from the above definition that the mode of baptism is not one of its essential elements; that all the essentials of baptism will be preserved when administered by the mode of pouring, sprinkling, or immersion. Therefore the Methodist Church holds that the three modes are equally valid, but that the weight of evidence is in favor of pouring and sprinkling. Pouring and sprinkling are really only one mode, they being alike as to mode; the difference being the freer use of water in pouring. The terms are borrowed from the Bible. “I will pour out my Spirit; and then will I sprinkle clean water upon you.”

*Ques.* Which mode has the weight of evidence in its favor, pouring or immersion?

*Ans.* The weight of evidence is in favor of pouring or sprinkling. Real baptism is the regenerating influence of the Holy Spirit in the heart; water baptism is the sign of this grace in the heart. That mode which is most like the mode of the Spirit’s operation is the true one. How does the Spirit come upon the

soul? Scripture teaches us upon this point: "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty." (Isa. xliv. 3.) "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean." (Ezek. xxxvi. 25.) Thus when Peter was addressing the company of Cornelius "the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard," and "on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost." (Acts x. 44, 45.) Then Peter baptized them on whom the Holy Ghost was poured out. Now, as the Holy Spirit was poured upon the people, it is almost certain that Peter poured water upon them as the most fitting mode of baptism. The sign as to mode would be like the thing signified, and the thing signified was poured out. Again, it is said in reference to Christ's baptism: "The heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting upon him." When God shows how he baptizes, the element descends upon the subject. But immersion requires that the subject descend, fall upon, the element. The mode of the Holy Ghost baptism is pouring—applying the Spirit to the soul; and water baptism, as the sign of this, should be poured, so as to make the sign correspond with the thing sig-

nified. But there is no resemblance between immersion (applying the candidate to the water and covering him up in it) and the pouring out of the Spirit upon the soul. The Spirit is shed upon us as rain upon the earth.

*Ques.* What does Dr. Pope say about it?

*Ans.* He says: "There are many considerations which lead us to regard affusion or sprinkling as the ordained form of the rite. The catholic design of the gospel suggests that the simplest and most universally practicable ordinance would be appointed. Again, the most important realities of which baptism is only the sign are such as sprinkling or affusion indicates. The blood of atonement was sprinkled on the people and on the mercy-seat, and the gifts of the Holy Ghost are generally illustrated by the pouring of water and the anointing."

*Ques.* What does Mr. Watson say?

*Ans.* Richard Watson, in his "Institutes," says: "It is satisfactory to discover that all attempts made to impose upon Christians a practice (immersion) repulsive to the feeling, dangerous to the health, and offensive to delicacy, is destitute of all scriptural authority and of really primitive practice."

*Ques.* Does our Church allow each person wishing to be baptized to choose his own mode?

*Ans.* Our Church, believing that the “essence of the rite” consists in applying water to the body in the name of the Trinity, says: “Let every adult person, and the parents of every child to be baptized, have the choice either of immersion, sprinkling, or pouring.” Dr. Raymond says: “No Church, as such, except the Baptist, requires any particular form of baptism as a *sine qua non* condition of membership.” So it will be seen that the Methodists are not alone in allowing the choice of modes.

*Ques.* Is there any command to be immersed?

*Ans.* There is no command to baptize by immersion. The duty of baptizing with water is commanded, but, like the Lord’s Supper, the mode of its administration is left undecided by any positive precept.

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#### LESSON XXXIV.

##### EXAMPLES OF BAPTISM.

The following Bible examples lead us to believe that the apostles administered baptism by pouring or sprinkling:

## I. THE BAPTISM OF PAUL.

Repeat the history of Paul's baptism.

"And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized." (Acts ix. 17, 18.)

*Ques.* What does the history of Paul's baptism teach?

*Ans.* 1. That the rising up and baptizing are closely connected. Dr. Armstrong says: "In the original the language is much more definite than it appears in the English version." On the expression, "Arise and be baptized" (literally, "Standing up, be baptized"), and "He arose and was baptized" (literally, "Standing up, he was baptized"), Dr. J. H. Rice remarks correctly: "According to the idiom of the Greek language, these two words do not make two different commands, as the English reader would suppose when he reads, (1) 'Arise;' (2) 'Be baptized.' But the participle "Arise" (literally "standing") simply modifies the signification of the verb, or rather is used to complete the action of the

verb; and therefore, instead of warranting the opinion that Paul rose up, went out, and was immersed, it definitely and precisely expresses his posture when he received baptism."

2. "Three days had he been sunk in feebleness and fasting when he 'arose and was baptized,' and then 'received meat and was strengthened.' Strange that where every movement is detailed with wonderful minuteness no going forth in his weakness to a river should have been mentioned. The whole air of it is that he just stood up from his prostration, in order to be baptized while upon his feet."—*Dr. Whedon.*

## II. BAPTISM OF THE JAILER.

Give the history of the jailer's baptism.

"And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway." (Acts xvi. 32, 33.)

*Ques.* What does this history teach?

*Ans.* It teaches: 1. That the jailer and his family were baptized at the hour of midnight in the prison. "And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway."

2. The baptism took place in the prison. We have the authority of the apostles that they did not go out of the prison. Paul refused to leave the prison privily; he demanded that the magistrates themselves should take them out as publicly as they had put them in. Now who can believe that Paul had gone out to some river at midnight—gone privily, secretly—and immersed the parties, and then slipped back into the prison and demanded a public and honorable discharge from the prison, after he had already been out. Can any one believe that Paul was capable of such deception as this? The refusal of the apostles to go out privily expressly implied that they had not been out the night before. Their language, if they had already been out, was based on concealment and equivocation. The magistrates might have fairly replied: "With what face can these men pretend that they will not go out without formal and public dismissal, when they have already gone out of their own accord, and are now in prison only by voluntarily imprisoning themselves?" No such hypocrisy can be charged against them. The conclusion is inevitable that they had not been out of prison bounds.

*Ques.* Is there any evidence that there was a tank or a pool in the prison, where immersion could be performed?

*Ans.* There is not the slightest ground for the wild supposition that a Roman prison was provided with any thing like a baptistery. The public authority that could thrust the innocent apostles, all bloody with stripes, into the irons of a dark dungeon would not likely provide baths for the comfort of their victims. The Romans were too cruel to mitigate the sufferings of their prisoners. Besides, Philippi was located in the very latitude of "Snowy Thrace," where such things would not be needed. A bath or tank in a Roman prison! As well expect to find a piano in the wigwam of a Flat Head Indian. There was a baptism in the prison, but most clearly it was not by immersion. To suppose that the jailer took his wife and family out of bed at midnight, and went in search of a river to find some suitable place to have them immersed, is simply absurd. Therefore the jailer and his family were baptized in the prison, and hence by sprinkling or pouring, as immersion would have been impossible under the circumstances.



*LESSON XXXV.*

III. BAPTISM OF CORNELIUS.

Recite the history of this baptism.

“While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter, Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed he him to tarry certain days.” (Acts x. 44-48.)

*Ques.* What is the inference drawn from this account?

*Ans.* The clear inference is that Cornelius and his household were baptized by pouring. The circumstances prove this: “They went to no river, they are not said to have gone down to any water, nor are we told that they had a bath adapted for such a purpose in their house. Peter’s remark about forbidding water indicates that it was to be brought to him for the purpose of administering this rite. And above all it should be noticed that when the apostle saw the Holy Spirit descending upon them he was reminded of what Christ

had said of John's baptizing with water. See Acts xi. 10. Whence this instantaneous recollection and association of ideas, but from the fact that the mode of water baptism was in form the same as that of the descent of the Holy Ghost? Had either John or Peter baptized by dipping, the narrative and the allusion would have been grossly inconsistent and calculated to mislead the most devout and clear-headed student of inspiration."—*Rev. W. Thorn.*

#### IV. BAPTISM OF THE THREE THOUSAND.

Repeat the history of this baptism.

"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls." (Acts ii. 38, 41.)

*Ques.* What do you learn from this account?

*Ans.* 1. That they were all actually baptized on this day is evident and is admitted by our opponents, who assure us that baptism always preceded admission into the visible Church. Now, supposing the twelve apostles to have been engaged in this work, and supposing immersion to have been the mode, it must have

been a most laborious, disagreeable, if not an impracticable, undertaking to be accomplished in the course of five or six hours. It should be taken into the account, moreover, that at least twenty-four robing-rooms and a dozen dipping-places must have been obtained for the purpose. And if more agents assisted and lightened the labor of each, a proportionate increase of both kinds of conveniences must have been provided.

2. Now, in Jerusalem itself there was neither a river nor fountain of water. Kedron was little better than the common sewer of the city, and was dry except during the early and latter rains. Siloam was only a spring without the walls, not always flowing, the contents of which were sometimes sold to the people by measure; and the pools supplied by its puny stream were either used for washing sheep and similar purposes (rendering them unfit for ceremonial lustrations), or they were the property of persons not likely to lend them for washing apostate strangers in. The water used for domestic purposes was obtained from the rains of heaven and preserved in household tanks, and of course was guarded with the utmost care and used with a rigid econo-

my, it raining there at only two seasons of the year. It may be further mentioned that the fountain of Siloam "is the only place in the environs of Jerusalem where the traveler can moisten his fingers, quench his thirst, and rest his head under the shadow of the cool rock and on two or three tufts of verdure."—*Lamartine*. That the case was precisely similar in the time of the apostles may be clearly proved by reference to the writings of Josephus, their countryman and contemporary. The clear inference is that they were baptized by pouring. Any other supposition bears upon its face a glaring absurdity.

*Ques.* What is the conclusion of the whole matter?

*Ans.* The conclusion of the whole matter to which we come is:

1. There is nothing in the history of John's baptism, nothing in the practice of the apostles, nothing in the miscellaneous allusions to baptism in the Epistles, nothing in the meaning of the word "baptize," to authorize the belief that any particular mode of baptism is essential to the validity of this rite.

2. While it cannot be determined with absolute certainty whether sprinkling, pouring,

or immersion was the mode of baptism practiced by the apostles, immersion is the least probable of the three, most inconvenient, and the least expressive of Holy Ghost baptism.

3. To require immersion in order to obtain admission into the Church is contrary to the teaching of the Bible, and to “teach for doctrine the commandments of men.” And to exclude pious persons from the Lord’s table because they have not been immersed is narrow-hearted bigotry.

4. Baptism is enjoined upon all nations, and pouring is adapted to all climates, but immersion is not. How could immersion be performed in those countries where for six months in the year every pond, river, and ocean is converted into solid ice?

5. Baptism by sprinkling can be performed on persons who profess religion on a dying bed, but immersion cannot.

6. Baptism by pouring comports with decency and propriety, but does immersion?

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## LESSON XXXVI.

### I. INFANT BAPTISM.

*Ques.* What does our Church teach about infant baptism?

*Ans.* That the right of infant membership existing in the Church has never been repealed. It stands intact to-day. No change has occurred. No proclamation has been made repealing the law of infant membership, and it is a well-known fact that a law once passed remains in force until formally repealed.

Now as infants were members of the Jewish Church, and as the gospel Church is but a continuance of the Jewish, and no repeal having taken place of this law of infant membership, the conclusion is inevitable that the right of infant membership remains intact.

Circumcision, with other forms of the Jewish Church, gave way to baptism in the Christian Church. Baptism, like circumcision, is an initiatory rite of admission into the visible Church. As circumcision was the gate for the Jew and the Gentile proselyte into the Jewish Church, so baptism is the door into the Christian Church.

*Ques.* If we admit that children dying in infancy are saved, what follows?

*Ans.* We are shut up to one of two conclusions, and must declare that infants are not fit

to go to heaven, or admit their fitness for baptism. For if you admit their fitness for heaven, that implies that they have saving grace, and saving grace is universally conceded to be the ground of baptism. We must believe, then, either the horrid doctrine of infant damnation or the doctrine of infant baptism.

NOTE.

The moral state decides the question of baptism, and not ages or classes of persons. If a grown person be a fit subject, or if a child be a fit subject, baptize him. And for this reason it is not necessary to have an express command to baptize infants. There is no command to baptize persons ten, twenty, fifty, or one year old. The authority is to baptize all who are fit subjects of the kingdom, young or old.

*Ques.* What does St. Peter say about it?

*Ans.* Peter in his pentecostal sermon expressly declared: "The promise is unto you and your children." The promise referred to is that which is contained in the Abrahamic covenant. Never was there a better time for Peter to declare the repeal of the law requir-

ing the children to be brought into the Church than this. If that law had been repealed, now that they were passing out of the old into the new Church, Peter, it seems to me, would have said: "Repent, and be baptized, . . . for the promise is unto you, but your children are excluded under the new dispensation." But he said that "the promise is to you and your children." Christ had commanded him before, "Feed my lambs," and he knew what he was talking about.

## II. CHRIST'S RECOGNITION OF INFANT MEMBERSHIP.

*Ques.* Did Christ recognize the Church-membership of children?

*Ans.* He did.

PROOFS.—"Then were there brought unto him little children, that he should put his hands on them, and pray: and the disciples rebuked them. But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me; for of such is the kingdom of heaven. And he laid his hands on them, and departed thence." (Matt. xix. 13-15.) "And they brought unto him also infants, that he would touch them: but when his disciples saw it, they rebuked them. But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the



kingdom of God as a little child shall in nowise enter therein." (Luke xviii. 15-17.)

NOTE.

"Suffer little children to come unto me; . . . for of such is the kingdom of God." What is the meaning of "kingdom of God?" The kingdom is sometimes used to signify the visible Church on earth. "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind." (Matt. xiii. 47.) Then again it is used to mean the Church of God in a state of glory. "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." If we take the first meaning, then the passage would read: "For of such is the visible Church," or such belong to the Church on earth. The Church was then the Old Testament Church. The Day of Pentecost had not come when the Christian Church came of the old into the new. These children, being the children of Jewish parents, had been introduced into that Church by circumcision. They were then members of that Jewish Church. Hence He says such are members of the Church, of the kingdom of God. Circumcision, with other forms of the Jewish Church, gave way to baptism in the Christian

Church. See Hebrews viii. 6-13. The children of believers hold a similar relation to the Christian Church as that held by Jewish children to the Jewish Church; but they were constituted members of the Jewish Church by the administration of circumcision. See Genesis xvii. 9-14. Therefore children may receive this Church rite, and should be regarded as members of the visible Church until their want of conformity to its requirements excludes them.

*Ques.* What other proof can be adduced?

### III. FAMILY BAPTISMS.

PROOF.—“And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshiped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us.” (Acts xvi. 14, 15.)

### NOTE.

Notice that nothing is said about her family exercising any religious duty, but it is said of her, “whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul.” As an adult person she repented

and believed; and as nothing is said about her family repenting and believing, but that they were baptized, the inference is that her family consisted of children too young to believe, and that they were baptized on the faith of the mother.

Give the case of the jailer's family:

"And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway." (Acts xvi. 31-33.)

#### NOTES.

1. The term "household," in the ordinary sense, includes all the children in a family. When it is said, "Joseph nourished his father, and his brethren, and all his father's household, with bread, according to their families," little children are included. When the industrious mother is described as "looking well to the ways of her household," the term includes her children, for it is said, "her children shall rise up and call her blessed."

2. Many attempts have been made to prove that there were no children in these families, but all such attempts are vain. The probabil-

ities are against all such reasoning. Besides these families Paul baptized "the household" of Stephanas. As households or families generally include children, we have no right to exclude them from those mentioned in the Bible. "Who can believe that not one infant was found in all these families, and that Jews accustomed to the circumcision, and Gentiles accustomed to the lustration of infants, should not have also brought them to baptism?"—*Bengel*. "The practice of infant baptism does not rest on inference, but on the continuity and identity of the covenant of grace to Jew and Gentile, the sign only of admission being altered."—*Alford*.

3. The apostolic practice was that of baptizing entire families. That is certain. Now, if modern preachers follow them, they will baptize entire families, and if they go on in doing so, it is certain they will baptize infants, for the continued practice of baptizing entire families will necessarily result in the baptism of infants. To follow apostolic example is to baptize entire families, and the continued practice of baptizing entire families is to baptize infants.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### Church Government.

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#### LESSON XXXVII.

#### CONFERENCES.

*Ques.* How many Conferences are connected with our Church?

*Ans.* Five—the General Conference, the Annual Conference, the District Conference, the Quarterly Conference, and the Church Conference.

#### I. THE GENERAL CONFERENCE.

*Ques.* What is a General Conference, and of whom is it composed?

*Ans.* The supreme government of the Church is vested in the General Conference. It is a law-making body. It is composed of the bishops of the whole Church, and of ministerial and lay delegates, who are elected by the several Annual Conferences. The clerical members of each Annual Conference elect one representative of their number for every thirty-six of the whole body. An equal number of

lay delegates is then elected by the lay members.

*Ques.* What is the business of the General Conference?

*Ans.* 1. The election of bishops when deemed necessary.

2. To create and re-adjust the boundaries of the Annual Conferences.

3. To revise the laws and rules of the Discipline.

4. To superintend the interests of Foreign Missions.

5. To elect officers to conduct the business of the general Publishing House.

#### NOTES.

1. The General Conference meets once in four years, its sessions lasting about four weeks, and is presided over by the bishops, each one presiding in turn, a day at a time.

2. The lay delegates appeared for the first time in the General Conference in 1870. The General Conference of 1866 having recommended it, and the Annual Conferences having concurred, it became a law and took effect in 1870. The introduction of the lay element into the General Conference puts the actual

government of the Church equally into the hands of the laymen and the ministry. It is the only law-making power in the Church, the Annual Conferences being only administrative and judicial. "The General Conference carries out its laws through an executive arrangement consisting of the bishops and presiding elders. By their agency it exercises a general superintendence over the Church."

## II. THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE.

*Ques.* What is an Annual Conference, and of whom composed?

*Ans.* The ministers within certain boundaries assemble each year, and this meeting is called an Annual Conference. It is composed of all the traveling ministers in full connection and four lay delegates, one of whom may be a local preacher, from each presiding elder's district.

*Ques.* What rights do the lay members have?

*Ans.* The lay members have equal rights with the ministerial, "to participate in all the business of the Conference, except such as involves ministerial character." The bishops, by virtue of their office, are Presidents of the Annual Conferences. The bishop presiding,

after careful consultation with the presiding elders, appoints annually each minister to his field of labor.

*Ques.* What is the business of the Conference?

*Ans.* The principal items of business are the following: 1. To receive from each pastor a report of his year's work. 2. To admit candidates for pastoral work on trial or into full connection. 3. To inquire into the life and administration of each pastor. 4. To try any who may be accused of immorality or heterodoxy. 5. To examine into the qualifications of candidates for deacon's and elder's orders, and elect the same to such orders. 6. To inaugurate measures to promote the work of Missions, Sunday-schools, and education within the boundaries of the Conference. 7. To distribute the collected funds for the relief of the worn-out ministers, and the widows and orphans of the deceased ministers who died members of the Conference. 8. The appointment of the preachers. Whatever may be the size and number of the Conferences, they are all organized on the same plan and governed by the same laws. There are forty-two Conferences in the M. E. Church, South.



## LESSON XXXVIII.

## III. DISTRICT CONFERENCE.

*Ques.* What is a District Conference, and of whom composed?

*Ans.* A District Conference is held annually in each presiding elder's district. It is composed of all the traveling and local preachers within the bounds of the district, and a certain number of laymen from each pastoral charge, which number is fixed by each Annual Conference. The presiding elder is the President, unless a bishop be present.

*Ques.* What is the business of this Conference?

*Ans.* 1. It is the duty of this Conference to inquire respecting the spiritual condition of each pastoral charge, and as to the attendance of the people upon the ordinances and social meetings of the Church. 2. To inquire respecting new fields for establishing missions, and what existing missions ought to be raised to circuits. 3. To inquire if the collections for Church purposes are properly attended to, and as to the comfortableness of churches and parsonages. 4. To inquire into the condition of Sunday-schools, manner of conducting them, and adopt suitable measures for insur-

ing success; and also as to the educational enterprises of the district; and to take a general oversight of all the temporal and spiritual affairs of the district, subject to the provisions of the Discipline. 5. To elect four lay delegates, one of whom may be a local preacher, to the ensuing Annual Conference. 6. These Conferences give prominence to preaching, prayer-meetings, love-feasts, and revival exercises.

#### IV. QUARTERLY CONFERENCE.

*Ques.* What is a Quarterly Conference, and of whom composed?

*Ans.* 1. The Quarterly Conference is an official meeting, held four times a year, for the purpose of transacting the business of each one of the pastoral charges.

2. It is composed of the pastor in charge, the local preachers, exhorters, stewards, trustees, class-leaders, superintendents of Sunday-schools, and secretaries of the Church Conferences.

*Ques.* Who is chairman of this Conference?

*Ans.* The presiding elder (in his absence the preacher in charge) is President of the meeting. He also appoints the times of hold-

ing the meetings, signs the records, and decides all questions of law.

*Ques.* What is the business of this Conference?

*Ans.* 1. It takes account of the temporal and spiritual welfare of the Church. 2. Elects trustees, stewards, and superintendents of Sunday-schools. 3. Licenses persons to preach or exhort. 4. Tries local preachers when accused, and is a court of appeal to laymen tried in the Church. 5. Recommends suitable persons to join the Annual Conference, and such local preachers as desire deacon's or elder's orders.

#### NOTE.

The minutes of this Conference must be regularly recorded, signed, and preserved. All ministers of every office and grade must first be licensed by a Quarterly Conference. None can get into the Annual Conference except they be recommended by it. The functions of this body are organic; its work is executive and judicial, and is closely related to the order and prosperity of the Church. It is the great wheel moving the business machinery of each circuit, station, and mission, and is indispensable to our system.

## V. CHURCH CONFERENCES.

*Ques.* What is a Church Conference?

*Ans.* This is a meeting of each society in a pastoral charge. The pastor is President. A secretary is elected to note the proceedings. The roll of members is called. All the members of the society have a right to participate in the meeting. It is a kind of mass-meeting of that particular Church.

*Ques.* What is the purpose of this meeting?

*Ans.* To lay before all the members reports:

1. Of the pastor, as to the state of his work.
2. Of the class-leader.
3. Of the superintendent of the Sunday-schools.
4. Of the stewards.

The meeting further inquires into what is being done for the relief of the poor, for the cause of Missions, for the circulation of our religious literature, and any other matter that may advance the good of the Church.

The meeting "may strike off the names of any who, on account of removal or other cause, have been lost sight of for twelve months: provided, however, that if such member appear and claim membership, he may be restored by a vote of the meeting." The information

given by the above reports is designed to enlist the energies of the whole Church in its local work of benevolence and spiritual enterprise. The main end of the Church Conference is to put every member to work for the cause of Christ. —

### LESSON XXXIX.

#### MINISTERIAL OFFICERS.

*Ques.* Who are the ministerial officers in the Methodist Church?

*Ans.* Bishops, presiding elders, pastors, and local preachers.

#### I. BISHOPS.

*Ques.* How are bishops constituted, and what are their duties?

*Ans.* Bishops are constituted by the election of the General Conference and the laying on of the hands of three bishops. Their duties are: 1. To preside in the General and Annual Conferences. 2. To make the appointments of the preachers. 3. To form the districts, circuits, and stations. 4. To ordain bishops, elders, and deacons. 5. To decide questions of law. 6. To prescribe a course of study for young ministers. 7. To change preachers in

the interval of Conferences, whenever necessary. 8. To travel through the Connection at large, and oversee the temporal and spiritual welfare of the whole Church.

#### NOTE.

The episcopacy of Methodism is not diocesan, like that of the Protestant Episcopal Church, but is co-extensive with the territory of the Church at large. It differs from the Episcopal Church mainly in not claiming apostolic succession. Methodist bishops have neither legislative nor voting power in the Conferences. They, according to our theory, are elders as to ministerial order, and episcopal as to the high office of general superintendency. Our moderate episcopacy does not claim any divine right for its existence, but affirms that no specific form of Church polity is prescribed in the New Testament, and therefore the Church is free to adopt such a form as in its judgment will best promote the cause of Christ.

#### II. PRESIDING ELDER.

*Ques.* By whom is the presiding elder appointed to his office?

*Ans.* The presiding elder is appointed by

the bishop, and is put in charge of a district having from twelve to twenty pastoral charges in it.

*Ques.* What are the official duties of the presiding elder?

*Ans.* The official duties of the presiding elder are many and weighty, and for the information of the people it may be well for us to specify. The duties of the presiding elder are: 1. To travel through his district, in order to preach and oversee the spiritual and temporal affairs of the Church. 2. To take charge of all the preachers in his district in the absence of the bishop. 3. To change, receive, and suspend preachers in his district, during the intervals of the Conferences. 4. To hold four Quarterly Conferences in each pastoral charge during the year. 5. To decide all questions of law which may come up in the regular business of the Quarterly Conference. 6. To see that every part of the Discipline be enforced in his district, etc. 7. If any preacher dies or leaves his work, the presiding elder, as far as possible, fills his place with another. 8. He is *ex-officio* President of the District Conference in the absence of a bishop. There are some other minor duties not mentioned,

but we have specified enough to show the importance of this office.

NOTE.

No class of ministers in the Methodist economy fills a more important position than the presiding elders. This will appear when we consider, first, their broad field of ministerial usefulness. They preach over the widest scope of territory, to the largest congregations of appreciative hearers, and under the most inspiring circumstances. Quarterly meeting occasions have always been, among Methodists at least, the most attractive and fruitful of good results. There is usually the fullest attendance of the members of the particular Church where these meetings are held, and also official brethren of other Churches. And, furthermore, it is the privilege of the presiding elders to preach to such congregations almost every Sunday in the year. And on such occasions they preach their select, most powerful, and impressive sermons. The field of ministerial usefulness, then, opened to the presiding elders is vastly superior to that of other preachers. In the light of these facts, it seems strange to hear the question asked, as it



sometimes is: "What is the use of presiding elders?" If, as is conceded cheerfully, the pastors of stations and circuits deserve to be well paid, highly esteemed, and dearly loved, because of their ministerial usefulness, then the presiding elders have a higher claim for the same benefactions of the people.

### III. PASTOR.

*Ques.* How is a preacher constituted a pastor?

*Ans.* The preacher in charge of work is one who has the pastoral care of a station, circuit, or mission, by the appointment of the regularly-constituted authority of the Church. He may be an elder, deacon, or an unordained preacher on trial, or a local preacher employed by the presiding elder.

*Ques.* What are his duties?

*Ans.* 1. To preach. 2. To receive, try, and expel members convicted of immorality. 3. To appoint class-leaders. 4. To see that the sacraments are duly observed. 5. To hold quarterly meetings in the absence of the presiding elder. 6. To report to the Quarterly Conference the general condition of his work. 7. To promote all benevolent collections of the

Church. 8. To report the number and state of the Sunday-schools.

#### NOTE.

Pastors are represented in the Bible as having "authority" and "rule" over the Churches. "Obey them that have the rule over you." They are to "preach the word," to "teach," to "baptize," to "feed the flock." They are sometimes called "elders," because of their oversight; "pastors," because of their watch-care; "ministers," because of the services rendered; "watchmen," because of their wide-awake vigilance; "embassadors," because of their authority to effect peace between God and man. The three functions of preaching the word, watching over the congregation, and ruling in the congregation by the exercising of discipline are clearly laid down in the New Testament. The responsibility of all these rests upon the pastor.

#### IV. LOCAL PREACHERS.

*Ques.* How are local preachers constituted, and to what body are they amenable?

*Ans.* Local preachers are constituted by the authority of the Quarterly Conference, and are amenable to that body. They must come

before that body properly recommended by the individual Church of which they are members. Such applicants are licensed to preach when, on examination, the Conference is satisfied that they have gifts, graces, and usefulness.

#### NOTE.

Local or lay preachers began with the early years of Methodism. They have always been a powerful arm in the Methodist work. They support themselves by secular labor, and preach in their neighborhood on Sundays, and render a very valuable service to the Church. Philip Embury, Captain Webb, and Robert Strawbridge, three local preachers, founded Methodism in America, and their successors have planted it in the new States of the West. Throughout the entire range of the Methodist Connection the local preachers are still an effective and faithful body of ministerial laborers. From their ranks come the great army of the itinerants. They usually begin as exhorters, graduate to the local ministry, and thence into the itinerancy.

No feature of Methodism shows more practical wisdom than this threefold arrangement and graduation of her ministry. The exhort-

er must show improvement before he can become a local preacher, and the local preacher must show capacity before he can enter the itinerant ranks.

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### LESSON XL.

#### THE LAY OFFICERS OF THE CHURCH.

*Ques.* Who constitute the lay officers of the Methodist Church?

*Ans.* Exhorters, class - leaders, stewards, trustees, superintendents of Sunday-schools, and secretaries.

#### I. EXHORTER.

*Ques.* How is an exhorter made, and what are his duties?

*Ans.* An exhorter is one licensed by the Quarterly Conference to read scriptural lessons, and make a practical application of their truths to the public congregation. They are not expected to select a text and preach a regular sermon. Their service is confined to singing, prayer, and public exhortation. They are useful laborers in our Church. Mr. Wesley permitted none of his members to exercise even the function of an exhorter without license, and so it is ingrafted in our economy that license to exhort must be given and annu-

ally renewed by the Quarterly Conference, to which body the exhorters are responsible for their official conduct.

## II. CLASS-LEADER.

*Ques.* Who appoints the class-leader, and what are his duties?

*Ans.* The class-leader is appointed by the preacher in charge. Mr. Wesley said: "That it may be more easily discerned whether the members of our societies are working out their salvation, they are divided into little companies called classes. A leader is appointed, whose duty it is: 1. To see each person in his class once a week; to inquire how their souls are prospering, to advise, reprove, comfort, or exhort them. 2. To report to the pastor any that are sick or walking disorderly."

## III. STEWARDS.

*Ques.* How are the stewards elected, and what are their duties?

*Ans.* Stewards are elected by the Quarterly Conference. Their business is: 1. To attend to the financial interests of the charge. 2. To advise and confer with the pastor as to the general management of the work.

Their duties are many and weighty. The

question of a liberal and generous salary for the pastor depends upon them, and whether the salary allowed shall be paid depends exclusively on their efforts in collecting the money. No other persons are authorized to collect the estimated amount. If they fail, the failure is remediless. Faithfulness in this office is of the highest importance to the welfare of the ministry and the prosperity of the Church.

#### IV. TRUSTEES.

*Ques.* Who holds all Church property?

*Ans.* All Church property—such as meeting-houses, parsonages, and cemeteries—held according to the Discipline is vested in a Board of Trustees, who hold it in trust for the use of the members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. The ministers have never claimed, nor do they hold in law, any title to such property. Churches thus held are obliged to be opened to ministers duly sent by Conference. These churches are held for the sacred purpose of divine worship, and are to be closed against all political or secular meetings. The trustees are elected by the Quarterly Conferences, and are responsible to the same.

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**V. SUPERINTENDENTS OF SUNDAY-SCHOOLS.**

*Ques.* How are the superintendents elected?

*Ans.* The Quarterly Conference elects superintendents of Sunday-schools on the nomination of the preacher in charge. The office of the superintendent is one of vast importance to the future prosperity of the Church, and therefore great care should be taken to put in men of the greatest efficiency.

## CHAPTER IX.

### Church Government (Continued).

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#### LESSON XLI.

##### PECULIAR USAGES OF METHODISM.

*Ques.* What are the peculiar usages of Methodism?

*Ans.* The class-meeting, the love-feast, and the itinerancy.

##### I. CLASS-MEETING.

*Ques.* What was the design of class-meeting?

*Ans.* In order to raise money to pay a church debt, Mr. Wesley divided his people into classes of twelve, requiring "every member to give a penny a week." These classes, meeting weekly to contribute their pennies, became also meetings of religious experience. Thus what were at first business meetings finally developed into class-meetings, which have become one of the peculiar institutions of Methodism.



*Ques.* What are the benefits of the class-meeting?

*Ans.* 1. It leads a man to cultivate personal religion, by telling his own experience and hearing that of others.

2. The man who relates his experience is perhaps more benefited than the hearers. It makes religion intensely a personal matter. "Come, hear what He hath done for my soul." In this matter we talk about ourselves without egotism. It puts a man to thinking about the dealings of God with his soul. It leads a man to obey the apostolic injunction: "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith." Self-examination is very important. The lack of it swamped the foolish builder spoken of in the sermon of Christ. It shut the door against the foolish virgins. These meetings are then especially valuable in leading persons to frequent personal examinations.

3. The class-meeting promotes the spirit of fraternal sympathy, the communion of saints. "I believe in the communion of saints." It is a spiritual feast. It is a foretaste of heaven. The fragrance of the blooming garden is not so sweet and refreshing. It is more genial than the beaming of a warm sun after a season

of cold, cloudy weather. "Behold, how . . . pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"

4. Class-meetings accomplish great good in leading men to a confession of their faults. There is nothing here like the Romish confessional. The confession is voluntary, not enforced. Voluntary confession is good for the health of the soul. So James thought: "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed." It leads a man to abandon his faults; it enlists the prayers of his brethren, and thus has healing and curing effects. When the prodigal confessed, "I have sinned," he arose and came to his father.

5. Class-meetings are eminently pleasing to God. "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels." The eloquent speeches of legislative halls and kingly parliaments may be written down by ten thousand editors of political journals, but

they are not written in the Book of God; but the class-meeting talks of God's people are. God thinks so much of these meetings as to have angel reporters there to take down every word, and have it put in the celestial journals.

6. These meetings serve to kindle religious feelings. In such a meeting the heart is drawn out in sympathy, prayer, and desire, and thus a warmer, purer flame is kindled; a fresher love toward God and man is aroused. When Christ held a kind of class-meeting with the disciples on their way to Emmaus, they said one to another: "Did not our hearts burn within us, while he talked with us by the way?" These disciples were in the gloom of spiritual winter, but their feelings soon began to kindle, burn, and flame as Christ talked with them. Their clouds were gone, the winter was over, the life of spring began to bud and blossom; balmy air, clear skies, and the warm Sun of righteousness were now pouring a tide of gladness into their souls. How many have gone to these meetings with the darkness of spiritual winter upon them, and have come out with the brightness and beauty of spring all around them!

LESSON XLII.

II. THE ITINERANCY.

*Ques.* What is the Methodist itinerancy, and what three things are required to constitute it?

*Ans.* A marked peculiarity of Methodism is the itinerancy of her ministry. It is a simple and easy plan of shifting the ministers from one field of labor to another. It requires three things:

1. That the congregations give up their right to choose their pastors.

2. That the ministers surrender their right to select their own field of labor.

3. That the appointment be referred to a competent, impartial, untrammelled, but responsible authority arranged by the law of the Church.

*Ques.* What liberty does it allow?

*Ans.* Both the people and ministers, however, are at liberty to make known their peculiar condition, wishes, and circumstances to the appointing power. And thus, under this elastic system, all parties have their own choice when it is clear that the good of the work will be served. While the bishops have the sole authority of making the appointments, they

always do so under the advice of the presiding elders. They are eyes and ears for the bishop, and mouth for the people and the preachers. Having traveled through all the work, and being intimately acquainted with the wants of the people and the peculiar qualifications of the preachers, they rarely fail in so advising the appointing power as to secure the best disposition to be made of the ministers. A minister under this system is liable to be moved after one year's service, yet he may remain four years if all the parties concerned think it best, but beyond this term he cannot go.

*Ques.* On what theory is it based?

*Ans.* The theory of the Methodist itinerancy is based upon the fact that "the world is the parish" of Methodism, that all men everywhere must be called to repentance. It is based upon the great commission, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." "Go ye;" do not wait until the people come to you. In the settled ministry the people call the preacher; in the itinerant system the minister seeks the lost sheep. Jesus Christ himself was an itinerating preacher. His circuit embraced Judea, Samaria, and

Galilee. The apostles were commanded to "go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." The "seventy" were sent forth, two and two, "into every city and place." "Paul said unto Barnabas, Let us go again, and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord." Philip traveled the new circuit, Samaria, which embraced Cæsarea, Gaza, Azotus, and all the cities on toward Cæsarea. And on the first round he had a great revival at Samaria, and was instrumental in the conversion of the Ethiopian eunuch, in the southern part of his circuit.

*Ques.* What are the peculiar advantages of the system?

*Ans.* 1. It keeps all the Churches constantly supplied with pastors. The weak and poor Churches are as regularly supplied as the rich ones. Though such Churches be out of the way and able to pay but little, yet they always have a pastor. Consequently we never have what is so frequently found in other denominations—viz., vacant churches.

2. No effective preacher in this system is ever found without a pastoral charge. We have no unemployed ministers waiting year after year for some congregation to call them.

The ministerial waste of time in other denominations in this respect is enormous. We noticed in a paper not long since that some eight hundred ministers in the Presbyterian Church in the United States were without regular pastorates.

3. It furnishes our people with a great variety of ministerial talent. One year they have a logician, to defend the doctrines of the Church. Next they have a son of thunder, to awake and arouse the sleepers. This year they have a revivalist, to get the people converted; the next, an experienced disciplinarian, to train them.

4. It re-adjusts annually the whole machinery of pastoral relations, so as to secure the greatest efficiency possible.

5. It takes ministers out of and puts them into pastoral charge without that violence and strife which attends the dissolution of pastoral relations in the other denominations.

6. Finally, it is well known that the changes in the settled ministry, on an average, are quite as frequent as among the Methodists, but without the harmony and efficiency of the itinerant system. We believe the plan to be providential. It has worked wonders, and we ex-

pect to adhere to it until the trump of judgment sounds.

### LESSON XLIII.

#### III. LOVE-FEAST.

*Ques.* What is the design of the love-feast?

*Ans.* The design of the love-feast is to cultivate and exercise fraternal love and good fellowship. It is done by eating and drinking the simple elements of bread and water as a beautiful evidence of the same, and by speaking together of religious experiences for the purpose of strengthening each other's faith and magnifying the goodness of God. The feasts of charity were held by the primitive Church very much as Moravians and Methodists now hold them. Dr. Neander, in his "Life of Christ," says: "At the *agapæ*, or love-feasts, all distinctions of earthly condition and rank were to disappear in Christ." Tertullian says: "Our supper shows its character by its name; it bears the Greek name of love." The following scriptures allude to it: "And they continued steadfastly . . . in breaking of bread, and in prayers." (Acts ii. 42.) "Upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread." (Acts xx. 7.) "These are spots in your feasts of charity,



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when they feast with you." (Jude 12.) The love-feast in the apostolic Church preceded immediately the communion of the Lord's Supper. The Discipline says: "Love-feasts shall be held quarterly, or at such other times as the preacher may consider expedient." They are to be held by partaking of "a little bread and water in token of brotherly love."

## CHAPTER X.

### Church Government (Continued).

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#### LESSON XLIV.

#### CHURCH-MEMBERSHIP.

*Ques.* Who are admitted into the Methodist Church?

*Ans.* 1. Adults who have been converted. Such persons, of course, as have realized a change of heart; those who have felt that their sins have been pardoned, their hearts regenerated, and experienced the fact that "the love of God has been shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost given unto them," are admitted into our Church. It has ever been characteristic of Methodism to insist on experimental religion. The early Methodists preached experience, told their own experiences, and this living experience constitutes the very salt of Methodism, and keeps it from taint and mold. This experience gives it a vital spirit. "Life and power" is a familiar note among our people.

*Ques.* What other classes are admitted?

*Ans.* 2. Penitent seekers. The Methodist Church, besides opening her doors to adult converts, takes in also penitent seekers. The following is the condition for the admission of such persons: "There is only one condition previously required of those who desire admission into these societies—a desire to flee from the wrath to come, and to be saved from their sins." This condition implies a willingness to be saved. This willingness to be saved implies also a readiness to be all and do all that the gospel requires of those who become partakers of salvation—a willingness to accept salvation from sin. To be willing to accept of salvation, therefore, implies a desire to be delivered from the dominion of sin. It implies such repentance as hates sin and desires purity of heart, and a fixedness of purpose to use the means of grace prescribed by the Church in order to attain actual salvation. Hence such persons coming into our Church pledge themselves: 1. To abstain from all evil. 2. To do good of every kind. 3. To attend upon all the ordinances of God. This "desire to flee the wrath to come and be saved from sin" is a deep, moving, stirring desire "fixed in the

soul." It is not a feeble, transient desire, but such a desire as brings forth fruit meet for repentance—a desire ripening into repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. Repentance implies pre-existing faith, and faith implies pre-existing repentance. Both are produced by the preliminary grace of the Holy Spirit, to be perfected by the willingness of man using the means of salvation. Now when such persons come to us desiring to be saved we admit them into the Church, where complete salvation may be attained.

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### LESSON XLV.

#### THE INTRODUCTION OF BAPTIZED CHILDREN INTO THE CHURCH.

*Ques.* What is the duty of pastors in reference to baptized children?

*Ans.* The Discipline says: "1. Let the minister diligently instruct and exhort all parents to dedicate their children to the Lord in baptism as early as convenient. 2. Let him pay special attention to the children, speak to them personally and kindly on experimental and practical godliness. 3. As soon as they comprehend the responsibilities involved in a public profession of faith in Christ, and give

evidence of a sincere and earnest determination to discharge the same, see that they be duly recognized as members of the Church, agreeably to the provisions of the Discipline."

NOTE.

Baptized children then ought to be enrolled by name in the register of each Church, as composing a distinct class of candidate members, and thus be held in expectancy till the time when they are to be examined, and those that are found to meet the prescribed conditions of the Discipline should be admitted into the full membership of the Church.

"There are but two kingdoms—one of truth and goodness and light, the other of falsehood and selfishness and darkness. The little children do not belong to the kingdom of the devil till some one has rescued them in Christ's name; they belong to Christ, unless the devil carries them off and makes them captives to sin and death, from which they may still be rescued by Christian chivalry. The little children are not to wait till they become as men before they can enter into Christ's kingdom; the grown men are to be converted and become as little children before they can enter it."

We have a right to hope, to pray, to expect for our children that, like John the Baptist, they will be filled from their mother's womb with the Holy Spirit. It is a most dangerous error to suppose that they cannot have the divine help and inspiration till they have come to be old enough to comprehend its desirability and to ask for it. It is a most dangerous error to suppose that our children must live in the wilderness till they are old enough to seek the promised land of their own accord. Not till the Church learns to train its own children—not only for Christ, but in Christ, from the cradle, so that they shall always be Christ's—will it begin to really vanquish the world. Till then it can hope for nothing more than to make reprisals.

I think that those of us who really believe this should carry out our belief consistently; that we should regard our children as members of the Church as truly as they are citizens of the commonwealth; that we should repudiate, in stronger terms than we are wont to do, the notion that they cannot be members of the outward community of saints till they have reached years of discretion; that we should accustom ourselves to regard them as

members with us of the household of faith, and should accustom them to so regard themselves; and that we may well use the rite of baptism as a sign of this faith that brings our children into Christ's household with ourselves.

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### *LESSON XLVI.*

#### THE DUTY OF JOINING THE CHURCH.

*Ques.* What are the benefits of Church-membership?

*Ans.* 1. Every one desiring to save his soul should seek a spiritual home in some branch of the Church of God. That this is a duty is seen from the teaching and practice of the early disciples. The converts on the Day of Pentecost immediately joined the band of disciples. "And the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls." (Acts ii. 41.) Also the converts in Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch were organized into Churches. Hence it is said of the apostles: "They returned again to Lystra, and to Iconium, and Antioch, confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith." (Acts xiv. 21, 22.) Within the Church thus organized are the ordinances of the gospel,

which are means appointed by God to help us work out our salvation—such as spiritual discipline, the communion, and the pastoral watch-care.

2. Consider, too, the benefit of pulpit instruction. How much light and warmth it sheds upon the world in this way! Think of eighty thousand ministers in the United States—men of culture and well skilled in preaching, pouring every Sabbath streams of moral light and truth upon the people. What a vast amount of good is done! What a great help it is to sit under the enlightening and stirring ministrations of the pulpit. It has pleased God to save men by preaching.

3. Then again, in the Church is the stirring influence of sacred song. The hymn-book is a power in the land. There can never be such a bond of union as sweet and animating song. How often on the wings of song our dull souls begin to take fire and rise heavenward. How often it comes as a refreshing rain on parched fields.

4. Furthermore, the Church generates spiritual warmth. It is difficult for single individuals, unless they be very highly endowed, to create in themselves fervor when alone. Now



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and then there is a nature that can generate its own fire; but ordinarily you must put stick upon stick, and spark to spark, and flame to flame, in order to make fervor. And it is the association of feeling, it is feeling in the multitude, whose thought kindles in each individual the highest forms of emotion. There are very few who have the power of solitary zeal, and there are very few who have not the power of associated zeal. The Christian religion depended at the first, and has ever since depended, and will to the end depend, very largely on Church conditions. For a religion whose element is love; and not awe; a religion whose very life is sweet and pure emotion, must thrive by the social principle. It was never meant that Christians should be solitary. It was never meant that they should feed themselves. It was meant that they should thrive in their combined and associated capacities.

## CHAPTER XI.

### Church Government (Continued).

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#### LESSON XLVII.

##### MINISTERIAL SUPPORT.

*Ques.* Has God made provision for the support of his ministers?

*Ans.* Yes. In the beginning God instituted a system of tithes for the express purpose of maintaining divine worship. The gold and silver of earth were stored away to do this. "The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof." Churches cannot be built without money. Missionary operations cannot be carried on without money. The question of the world's conversion is largely one of money. The efficiency of the ministry is largely dependent upon a competent support.

Repeat the divine law on this subject:

"And all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the Lord's: it is holy unto the Lord." "And concerning the tithe of the herd, or of the flock, even of whatsoever passeth under

the rod, the tenth shall be holy unto the Lord." (Lev. xxvii. 30, 32.)

*Ques.* What use was made of this tenth?

*Ans.* This one-tenth of the annual increase is that which was required from the beginning as the least that would meet the requirements of God's law. This was emphatically the Lord's tenth, and by him was wholly applied to the support of his ministering servants in the temple. To withhold it was to steal God's property. "Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings." What follows? "Ye are cursed with a curse, for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation."

*Ques.* Was this law repealed by the gospel dispensation?

*Ans.* This law was not repealed by the gospel dispensation, but was fully indorsed by the New Testament writers. Paul says: "Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar? Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel." (1 Cor. ix. 13, 14.)

## NOTE.

Thus we see that the law of the tithe is fully indorsed by the apostle. Jesus sanctioned the great liberality of Zaccheus when he gave "half his goods," commended the example of the poor widow who gave "all her living," and said concerning the law that he "came not to destroy, but to fulfill." The Church is the same through all ages, and the law to support her ministers must be the same.

*Ques.* Does the Bible make the practice of constant giving a Christian duty?

*Ans.* It does, very clearly and fully.

PROOFS.—"Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the first-fruits of all thine increase: so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine." (Prov. iii. 9, 10.) "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty. The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself." (Prov. xi. 24, 25.) "And if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noonday: and the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not." (Isa. lviii. 10, 11.) "Bring ye all the tithes into the store-house, that there may be meat in

mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the Lord of hosts." (Mal. iii. 10, 11.) "Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again." (Luke vi. 38.) "I have showed you all things, how that so laboring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive." (Acts xx. 35.) "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace [the word 'grace' here refers to temporal blessings] abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work." (2 Cor. ix. 7, 8.)

## NOTES.

### 1. *The Ground of Giving.*

"The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein." The earth is God's great plantation, and man is his tenant; and nothing can be more reasonable than that he should require a tenth

to support his ministers. This is his rental money.

“Now this truth is a simple and even a self-evident one. God has made me, and I and all my powers belong to the Maker. He has made the earth and stored it with all its wealth; he has created the natural forces and laws which are used in the creation of wealth, and he has put all these at my service. My labor is his because I am his handiwork, because I am dependent upon him for my existence; because, therefore, my supreme allegiance is due to him; and all that by means of my labor I get out of the earth is his, because I am merely taking from the treasure-house that which he previously put there. All the wealth which is dug out of the earth in coal and silver and gold, or which is gathered from its surface in wheat and corn and the various cereals and fruits, or which is indirectly produced by changes of form, structure, and location, by the power of steam or by water-power or by the wafting wings of commerce, is gathered from stores which he has accumulated and made valuable by means of power with which he has endowed us. To take these stores and employ these powers for our own uses and

purposes is just as truly an act of dishonesty as for the clerk to take money from his employer's till for his own pocket."

## 2. *The Cheapness of Preaching.*

Sometimes the people complain that the preachers require too much money. Now we assert that there is no class of men of the same ability and culture who work so cheaply as preachers. We think the ministers are equal in ability and mental culture to any other class of men. Yet while lawyers, doctors, and good business men average about \$2,000 a year, the salaries of preachers will not average more than \$500 a year. The amount paid every year to the lawyers of this country is put down at \$35,000,000; that paid to the ministers at \$25,000,000, a difference of \$10,000,000.

Then compare the expenses of the ministry with the injurious luxuries of the people, and what a difference! Thousands of dollars are paid for liquor, useless jewelry, and gaudy raiment. For every dollar that this nation spends for the ministry it spends \$76 for intoxicating liquors. North Carolina spends \$12 for liquor where one is given for the gospel.

It is a sad fact that heathens spend more in keeping up their forms of idolatry than Christians do in supporting their preachers. The annual cost of a heathen temple in India is set down at \$450,000, a little more, perhaps, than is paid yearly to all the ministers in North Carolina. The annual expenses of keeping one idol in Khundoba is put down at \$30,000. Dr. Duff says that one pagan festival cost \$2,000,000.

It is stated on good authority that the dogs cost this nation two-thirds as much as the preachers. It is estimated that the dogs cost \$16,000,000 per year, while the preachers cost only \$25,000,000. Let us hear no more nonsense about the high cost of preaching, since it is demonstrated that there is nothing in all this land so cheap as the ministry, when we consider their talents and the benefits of their preaching.

### *3. The Ability of the People to Pay.*

That the professed followers of Christ in our day and country possess a large share of this world's riches is plain to the most casual observer. They own broad acres of fertile land, on which the great staples of cotton,



corn, wheat, tobacco, and fruits are grown under the warmth of God's sun and the showers of his rain. Others are engaged in the profitable business of merchandizing, mining, manufacturing, banking, and other spheres of trade. There are engineers, architects, lawyers, physicians, authors, school-teachers, and editors belonging to the Church of Christ. Most of the immense wealth of this country is in the hands of professed Christians. The wealth of this land is not held by infidels. Why, then, does the cause of the Lord languish for the want of money? Why, then, do Church interests languish for the want of money?

#### 4. *The Lack of Willingness to Give.*

"The children of Israel brought a willing offering unto the Lord, every man and woman, whose heart made them willing to bring for all manner of work, which the Lord had commanded to be made." This was said of the Israelites while contributions were required to build the tabernacle. The men gave their money, and the women gave their jewels. The "willing" heart made every thing easy. It is not hard to raise money for Church purposes

when the people have a willing heart to give. These Israelites were poor—a nation of ex-slaves. Though fond of jewelry, the women stripped themselves of their ornaments, of their bracelets and ear-rings—their tents of furniture, to build the tabernacle. They gave what was costly and dear to them. Why? They had a “willing heart.” Enthusiasm makes hard things easy. It is hard to raise money for Missions, to pay the preacher, or to build churches, when there is no willingness of heart among the people. When the rain of revivals comes then streams of liberality flow.

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### *LESSON XLVIII.*

#### ON MISSIONS.

*Ques.* For what purpose was the Christian Church appointed and organized?

*Ans.* To bring the whole world to the knowledge of Jesus Christ.

*Ques.* What was the last command of Jesus to his disciples, as given by Matthew?

*Ans.* “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” (Matt. xxviii. 19.)

*Ques.* What similar command is given in Mark's gospel?

*Ans.* "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." (Mark xvi. 15.)

*Ques.* What part of the world's population has received the gospel and become nominally Christian?

*Ans.* About one-fourth, or three hundred and thirty million people.

*Ques.* How much of this world yet remains without Christianity?

*Ans.* Three-fourths, or nine hundred and thirty million people.

*Ques.* Into what religions are these unchristianized people divided?

*Ans.* Heathens, or idol-worshippers, eight hundred and seventeen millions; Moham-medans, or believers in the false prophet, one hundred and three millions; Jews, seven millions.

*Ques.* What is the condition of those lands which are without the gospel?

*Ans.* They are in deep ignorance and accustomed to the practice of the vilest crimes.

*Ques.* What crimes are most prevalent in the heathen lands?

*Ans.* The worship of idols, the murder of little children, falsehood, and licentiousness.

*Ques.* What is the duty of the Church toward these nations?

*Ans.* To send them the gospel.

*Ques.* How is this declared in the New Testament?

*Ans.* "How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?" (Rom. x. 14.)

*Ques.* What is the duty of every Christian toward these people?

*Ans.* Either himself to go to them with the gospel, or to help in sending some one who can teach them.

*Ques.* What motive should impel all to aid in sending the gospel to the world?

*Ans.* The motive of gratitude to God, in that we ourselves have received it, and should desire to extend its blessings to others.

#### SUCCESS OF MISSIONS.

It has not been more than one hundred years since the earnest missionary work commenced. William Cary, who entered India in

1793, may be considered a pioneer in the work. Dr. Judson began in Burmah in 1814. Dr. Robert Morrison baptized his first convert in China in 1814. What is the condition of the work now? It is this: Protestant missionaries occupy to-day five hundred separate fields. In them they have 40,000 missionaries, 500,000 heathen children attending Christian schools, 1,000,000 communicants enrolled in congregations gathered from among the heathen; and 2,000,000 stated hearers are nominal adherents of the gospel faith. About \$10,000,000 is paid annually to support the cause of Missions.

#### SUCCESS OF MISSIONS IN FIJI ISLANDS.

In the Fiji Islands, forty years ago, the people fed on human flesh, and were sunk in the deepest ignorance and idolatry. Missionaries have led 30,000 of these man-eaters to be Christians. They have given up their idols, pay about \$15,000 for religious objects annually, and have 40,000 of their children in Sunday-schools. On the Island of Madagascar the savage people have been Christianized. There are 200,000 native Christians there now. There are about 73,000 native Christians in

East India. In China there have been established missionary centers in 40 large cities and 360 villages.

The horrible practice of burning alive widows on the graves of their dead husbands, of killing infants, and offering human sacrifices, have all been banished from the land by the influence of the gospel.

#### ENCOURAGEMENTS.

The whole world is now open for the reception of the gospel.

The Bible is printed in 250 languages and dialects.

There are 150,000,000 copies of the Bible in circulation.

Twenty-five Woman's Boards in England and America are actively engaged in foreign mission-work.

The Young Men's Christian Associations are now formally inaugurating foreign-mission branches.

The number of missionary societies is ten-fold what it was eighty years ago.

The number of converts is nearly fifty-fold.

The increased facilities for intercommunication.

The diffusion of the English language.

Wonderful revivals, with pentecostal power, are frequent in heathen lands.

The increase in membership in heathen lands is thirty times greater than at home, in proportion to the number of ministers employed, although the tests of discipleship are of the most trying nature.

Two hundred and fifty millions of women depend for the gospel upon the women of the Protestant Churches of America.

Nine-tenths of the contributions to Foreign Missions are given by one-tenth of the Church-membership, while only one-half of the membership give any thing. The average amount per member is fifty cents per annum—only the seventh part of a cent per day for the conversion of a thousand millions of heathen!

# APPENDIX.

## DENOMINATIONAL STATISTICS FOR 1887.

### I. METHODISTS.

NAME OF BODY.	Churches	Minis's	Communi'ts
Methodist Episcopal.....	20,755	12,554	2,093,935
Methodist Episcopal, South.....	11,364	4,530	1,102,926
African Methodist Episcopal.....	2,800	2,600	500,000
African Methodist Episcopal Zion .....	2,200	2,000	314,000
United Brethren.....	4,332	1,378	185,103
Colored Methodist Episcopal.....	2,016	1,729	165,000
Methodist Protestant.....	1,799	1,238	133,514
Evangelical Association.....	1,808	1,069	132,508
American Wesleyan .....	495	179	17,727
Congregational Methodists.....	70	225	13,750
Free Methodists.....	358	373	12,314
Independent Methodists.....	35	30	5,000
Primitive Methodists.....	125	50	3,837
Union American Meth. Episcopal (col.)	50	112	3,500
Total Methodists.....	48,207	27,967	4,683,114

### II. BAPTISTS.

Regular Baptists .....	30,522	19,377	2,732,570
Anti-mission Baptists.....	900	400	40,000
Free Baptists.....	1,542	1,291	82,323
Other Free Baptists.....	650	600	34,144
Disciples of Christ.....	4,536	2,712	582,800
Christians (North).....	1,662	1,327	122,000
Christians (South).....	75	35	18,000
Church of God.....	500	450	45,000
Seventh-day Baptists .....	94	103	8,720
Dunkards.....	350	1,578	60,000
Six Principle.....	16	16	1,450
Total Baptists.. .....	40,847	27,889	3,727,007



## III. PRESBYTERIANS.

NAME OF BODY.	Churches	Minis's	Communi'ts
Presbyterians, Northern .....	6,281	5,546	661,809
Presbyterians, Southern.....	2,198	1,085	143,743
Presbyterians, Cumberland.....	2,546	1,547	138,564
Presbyterians, Cumberland (col.).....	500	200	13,000
Presbyterians, United.....	881	736	91,086
Presbyterians, Reformed (Synod).....	121	115	10,856
Welsh Calvinistic.....	175	84	9,563
Associated Reformed Synod, South.....	112	84	7,015
Reformed (General Synod).....	54	32	6,800
Total Presbyterians.....	12,868	9,429	1,082,436

## IV. LUTHERANS.

General Synod.....	1,449	910	138,988
United Synod, South.....	360	180	29,683
General Council.....	1,835	993	258,408
Synodical Conference .....	2,006	1,094	297,631
Independent Synods (13) .....	1,923	813	206,120
Total Lutherans.....	7,573	3,990	930,830

## V. CONGREGATIONALISTS.

Congregationalists.....	4,277	4,090	436,379
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## VI. EPISCOPALIANS.

Protestant Episcopal Church.....	4,434	3,745	418,531
Reformed Episcopal Church.....	90	120	12,000
Total Episcopalians .....	4,524	3,865	430,531

## VII. REFORMED.

Reformed (German).....	1,468	788	137,937
Reformed (Dutch).....	536	554	86,037
Total Reformed.....	2,004	1,342	259,974

## VIII. CHRISTIAN UNION.

Christian Union Churches. ....	1,500	550	120,000
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## IX. FRIENDS.

NAME OF BODY.	Churches	Minis's	Communi'ts
Orthodox.....	600	500	70,000
Non-affiliating Orthodox.....	100	.....	12,000
Hicksite.....	.....	.....	23,000
Total Friends.....	700	500	105,000

## X. MENNONITES.

All branches .....	550	500	100,000
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## XI. ADVENTISTS.

Adventists.....	91	107	11,100
Second Adventists.....	583	501	63,500
Seventh-day Adventists .....	798	213	23,111
Total Adventists. ....	1,472	821	97,711

## XII. MORAVIANS.

Moravians.....	83	64	10,686
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## XIII. MISCELLANEOUS.

Universalists .....	695	695	35,550
New Jerusalem.....	90	78	5,015
Unitarians.....	365	459	20,000
	1,150	1,210	60,565
Grand total Protestant Churches .....	125,755	82,21	712,044,233

## ROMAN CATHOLICS.

	Churches	Priests.	Population.
Total.....	6,910	7,658	7,000,000

The *Catholic Directory* has discontinued its estimates of population, and the above is supposed to be approximately correct. It must be kept in mind, however, that the whole pop-

ulation is reckoned. No means are accessible for ascertaining the number of actual communicants. The usual ratio among Protestant Churches is one communicant to four adherents to the denomination. This would give to the Roman Catholics 1,750,000 communicants. Estimating as the Romanists do, the Methodist population of this country would be 18,762,000; the Baptist, 14,079,000; the Presbyterian, 4,328,000; Lutheran, 3,720,000; Episcopalian, 1,720,000, etc.

## COMPARATIVE STATISTICS.

All Methodists in the United States.....	4,683,514
All Baptists in the United States .....	3,727,007
All Presbyterians in the United States.....	1,082,436
All Lutherans in the United States.....	930,830
All Congregationalists in the United States.....	436,373
All Protestant Episcopalians in the United States.....	418,531

## DENOMINATIONAL STATISTICS FROM U. S. CENSUS, 1870.

DENOMINATIONS.	Congregations.	Church edifices.	Church Sitzings.	Church Property.
Methodists .....	25,278	21,837	6,528,209	\$69,854,121
Baptists.....	15,839	14,032	4,365,135	41,607,198
Episcopalians.....	2,835	2,601	991,051	36,514,549
Presbyterians.....	7,824	6,071	2,697,244	43,365,306
Lutherans.....	3,032	2,776	977,332	14,917,747
Roman Catholics .....	4,127	3,806	1,990,514	60,985,566
Congregationalists .....	2,887	2,715	1,117,212	25,069,698

## NOTE.

The Methodists began to preach in this country in 1773; the Baptists began in 1639; the Presbyterians began in 1703; the Congrega-

tionalists began in 1648; the Catholics, Lutherans, and Episcopalians began with the settlement of the country. It will be seen that the Methodist is the youngest of the Churches mentioned. She is 177 years younger than the Baptist, 118 years younger than the Congregationalist, 63 years younger than the Presbyterian; while the Catholic, Episcopalian, and Lutheran are as old as immigration to the American shores. Notwithstanding this, the Methodist Church is by far the largest in numbers. The census table shows that she has one-third of all the Church organizations in the United States, has one-third of all the church-edifices, preaches to one-fourth of all the church-going population, and has built on an average nearly two churches per day for the last twenty years. The Methodist population in the United States is estimated to be 18,345,000. "In twenty-two of the thirty-seven States of the Union the Methodist Church is first in numbers; in eleven others she is second; in three others she is third. The Roman Catholic Church is first in five States; the Baptist is first in six States; and the Congregationalist is first in four States.

It will be seen from the foregoing tables that the Methodist Church stands far in advance of all other denominations in this country. She ranks first in the number of her communicants, in the number and capacity of her church-buildings, in the value of Church property, and in the amount of money collected and expended for Church purposes.

#### THE CLAIMS OF METHODISM.

While we do not claim to be the only Church, we do claim to be superior to some others in many important particulars.

1. We claim superiority in the scriptural soundness of our leading doctrines. There are four great doctrinal systems in the world—the Roman Catholic, the Calvinistic, the Lutheran, and the Wesleyan. The Catholic creed teaches that salvation comes through the Papal Church alone. The Calvinistic creed makes the salvation or non-salvation of every soul to depend on the unchangeable decree of God. The Lutheran creed lodges the salvation of the soul in the sacraments. The Methodist creed makes the salvation or non-salvation of every soul depend on his willingness to receive and appropriate the free

grace of the gospel offered to all men. This creed presents a doctrine high as the love of God and wide as the deep wants of the human race. This ground-view of Methodism appeals to the common sense of mankind for its truth. It has driven Calvinism practically out of the pulpit of Christendom, and is rapidly ascending the throne of universal acceptance. It preaches a free and full salvation, justification by faith alone, carefulness to maintain good works, the witness of the Spirit to the believer's present acceptance, holiness of life, a burning love for the salvation of souls, and an entire reliance upon the Holy Spirit as the source of spiritual power. It has an open communion table, contends for a pure and spiritual worship, a deep and heartfelt experience of vital religion, and encourages and promotes revivals as vital to the health and growth of a Church. The vast army of Methodism has been recruited mainly through its system of revivals. While other Churches have been gathering a few members through family training and catechetical instruction, Methodism has swept them in by hundreds and thousands. The first method is the slow way of fishing with a hook and line;

the revival method is fishing with a net, that goes far out into the waters and sweeps in thousands with one haul.

2. Methodism claims superiority in adapting itself to the circumstances of human life. "Methodism," says the celebrated Dr. Talmage, "in England preaches in a gown, in our Eastern cities in broadcloth, in the West in shirt-sleeves, if the season be appropriate—preaching in the house or in the fields—anywhere (it makes no difference where), preaching just as well in one place as in another. It takes the express train and goes across the continent, or a horse and rides with saddle-bags across the prairie. It is at home in the magnificent St. Paul's, in New York, and not at all inconvenienced in a log cabin. . . . Here is a man fallen down in the ditch of sin and crime. How are we going to get him out? We come up elegantly appareled, and we look at him, and we say: 'What a pity it is to see a man so deep in the mud! We wish we could get him out. Is it not awful to see that man suffering there? Get a pry, somebody, and help now! I wish I had on my old clothes.' While we stand there looking at the poor man, the Methodist comes along and says, 'Brother, give me

your hand,' pulls him up, and sets him on the Rock of Ages."

We are told in one of the Arabian stories of a fairy tent which a young prince brought, hidden in a walnut shell, to his father. Placed in a council-chamber, it grew till it canopied the king and his ministry. Taken into the court-yard, it filled the space till all the household stood beneath its shade. Brought into the midst of the great plain without the city, where the army was encamped, it spread its expansive shade all abroad, till it gave shelter to a mighty host of people. It had wonderful flexibility and expansiveness. And such is the expansive flexibility and adaptableness of Methodism. It has this power of easy adaptation to the most diversified conditions of life. It reaches out its arms to embrace the negro in his hut, the backwoodsman in his forest home, the scholar in his study, and the prince in his gilded palace.

3. Methodism, more than any other denomination, has exercised a watch-care over individual members. To visit from time to time every house where there is a Methodist member, though it may be but a servant girl, and to talk and pray with them, is the old ideal of



a Methodist preacher's duty, and it is yet held and acted on in most places. The class-leader is also to watch over the members in his charge, and "to see every member of his class once a week" was formerly exacted of him. This constant watchfulness checked incipient backslidings, recovered those who had gone astray, and was a powerful engine for the enforcement of discipline. The class-leaders are appointees of the pastor, and are his deputies. Attendance upon the class-meetings is no longer compulsory, but the watchfulness of the leader over his flock and his accountability to the pastor in the regular meetings of the official board, are yet great powers for the conservation of the membership. A system of intelligence is thus established by which the pastor is enabled to consider every member—even the most obscure—in his individual circumstances and qualities. Methodism is not so much an organization, but an organism, in which every part—even the remotest—is vitalized by its connection with the whole. Of late years an effort has been made to supply the lack of the old efficiency of the class-meeting system by organizing the ladies of the city congregations into societies for the

purpose of assisting the pastor in visitation and supervision.

Methodism has always been intensely social. Its class-meetings were family gatherings; its love-feasts and prayer-meetings and "general class-meetings" were so many ever-recurring expressions of its social life. More powerful than any oratory is the influence of fellowship upon the masses of the people, and this fellowship Methodism furnished and still furnishes. In the older and less conventional days I have seen class-meetings and love-feasts break up with what the enthusiastic Western people called "a good old-fashioned Methodist shake-hands all round." No social distinctions were tolerated then. The title of "brother" and "sister," then in almost universal use between Methodists as substitutes for "Mr." and "Mrs." was a symbol of the entire equality of brethren in the Church.

4. Methodism claims superiority in her methods of diffusing the gospel over the world through the itinerant ministry. It is this grand agency that has enabled Methodism to keep up with the march of frontier settlements, cross the Alleghanies, follow the Indian trail beyond the Mississippi, and at length fill

the far West with the sound of its victories. In the wake of its luminous progress have sprung up all kinds of improvements. It has been a popular educator, civilizer, and refiner to the rude masses of the West. A distinguished outsider has "recognized in the Methodist economy, as well as in the zeal and the devoted piety and efficiency of its ministry, one of the most powerful elements in the religious prosperity of the United States, as well as one of the firmest pillars of their civil and political institutions." Bancroft, the historian, acknowledges the Methodists as the "pioneers of religion" in this country, and says that they have "carried their consolations, songs, and prayers to the farthest cabins in the wilderness." Another talented writer has said: "Their voice went through the land as a trumpet call. It sounded over the heights and depths, and filled the country with its echoes." Not only have the banners of Methodism been planted in all the States and Territories of the Union from sea to sea, but it has spread rapidly over Great Britain, its native home; into Scotland, Ireland, to Nova Scotia, the West Indies, France, Africa, India, Germany, and is achieving remarkable success

among the cannibal islands of the Southern Sea. "The world is my parish," said Mr. Wesley, and it seems that this prophecy is about to be realized. For the bright eye of the sun sees no longitude on the rolling earth where Methodism is not working for the salvation of men. May her future history realize the noble anticipations of the poet Montgomery, who said: "Century expanding after century, like circle beyond circle in broad water, shall carry farther and farther the blessings of the Methodist dispensation, till they have tracked every sea and touched every shore."













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